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Postpositional words in Bodo Language

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ABSTRACT

A considerable set of postpositional words is employed in Bodo. Their syntactic environments and grammatical functions have been analysed and discussed in this study. They have a wide range of grammatical functions such as adverbial, exclusive, comparative, comitative, quantifier, degree, mood, simultaneous action, serialisation of action, illocutionary force, cause, promise, assertiveness, certitude and so on. They are used either as integral words or particles in the language.
This study also discusses postpositional words in terms of their property that they follow nominals, noun phrases, verbs, verb phrases, clauses and sentences.

Introduction

Bodo belongs to the Bodo part of languages under the Bodo-Garo branch of Sal (Bodo-Konyak-Jingpho, Brahmaputran) languages (Post & Burling 2017: 224-5). It is spoken by 1,482,929 in India (Language Data, June 2018 of Census of India 2011).[2] Most of the speakers are found in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) consisting of five districts Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, Tamulpur, and Udalguri of Assam, India. It is also spoken in all the other districts of the state and all the north-eastern states of India including the northern part of West Bengal where it is also known as Mech(e). There are 5,193 Bodo (aka Meche) people in Nepal, of which 4,203 speak Bodo as their mother tongue.[3]

Bodo has average vowel and consonant inventories with six vowel phonemes /*i*, *e*, *a*, *ɔ*, *u*, *ɯ*/ and sixteen consonant phonemes /*p(pʰ)*, *b*, *t(tʰ)*, *d*, *k(kʰ)*, *g*, *m*, *n*, *ŋ*, *s*, *z*, *h*, *l*, *ɾ*, *j*, *w*/. The voiceless stops /*pʰ*, *tʰ*, *kʰ*/ and /*p*, *t*, *k*/ are in complementary distribution; the former occur at onset position, whereas the latter occur at coda position. /*d*/ and /*ɾ*/ are in free variation; however, /*d*/ can vary into /*ɾ*/ but not vice-versa.

Bodo is a tone language; it has three possible distinctive heights of pitch: mid or level, falling or low and rising or high. However, the distinction is between any two of them (ref. Mushahary & Veikho 2016: 66); it may be either falling vs rising, level vs falling, or level vs rising.[4]

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[2] It is one of the 22 scheduled languages of India. On the basis of the number of speakers, it is the 26th most spoken language of India.

[3] https://censusnepal.cbs.gov.np/results/downloads/caste-ethnicity retrieved on August 9, 2023.

[4] The falling tone feature has been marked in this study with a grave accent symbol; the rising tone feature with the acute accent symbol whereas the level tone feature has been marked with a macron above the corresponding sounds.

The common syllable structures are CV and CVC. It also employs sesqui syllables of C.CV and C.CVC structures. For example- [*siɾì*] > [*s.ɾì*] 'silent' (Brahma 2021: 257), [*kʰalām*] > [*kʰ.lām*] 'do' (ibid 259), etc.

The basic parts of speech in Bodo are found to be verbs and nouns of monomorphemic structure. However, polymorphemic verbs are derived with the help of affixation of adverbial suffixes (e.g. [*pʰɯì*] 'come' + [*-gɾɯ*] 'first' > [*pʰɯìgɾɯ̀*] 'first come'), causative affixes (e.g. [*sɯ-*] 'CAUS' + [*gāb*] 'cry' > [*sɯ̀gāb*] 'make cry', [*bìɾ*] 'fly' + [*-hɯ*] 'CAUS' > [*bìɾhɯ̀*] 'make fly'), passive suffix (e.g. [*ɾaì*] 'scold; speak' + [*-za*] 'PASS' > [*ɾaìzā*] 'be scolded; be spoken'), deictic suffixes (e.g. [*kʰāɾ*] 'run' + [*-láŋ*] 'DST' > [*kʰāɾláŋ*] 'run away'), telicity suffixes (e.g. [*zá*] 'eat' + [*-kʰāŋ*] 'TERM' > [*zākʰāŋ*] 'end eating', [*ùndū*] 'sleep' + [*pʰū*] 'CULM' > [*ùndūpʰū*] 'sleep at the deepest level'), and negative/prohibitive affixes (e.g. [*da-*] 'PROH' + [*tʰáŋ*] 'go' > [*dàtʰáŋ*] 'don't go'). Bodo verbs are also found in the form of v+v complex structure e.g. [*gàn*] 'wear' + [*sɯ̀laī*] 'change' > [*gànslaī*] 'change dress', [*tʰáŋ*] 'go' + [*pʰɯ̀lā*] 'deceive' > [*tʰāŋpʰlā*] 'pretend to go'. Again, polymorphemic nouns are derived with the help of category affixes (e.g. [*m*V-] 'QUADRUPED MAMMAL' + [*déɾ*] 'become big' > [*mɯīdéɾ*] 'elephant', [*tʰaī-*] 'FRUIT' + [*bèŋ*] 'become straight' > [*tʰaībēŋ*] 'cucumber'). They are also derived from verbs through affixation (e.g. [*zān*] 'become far' + [*-tʰaī*] 'RESULT (< FRUIT)' > [*zāntʰaī*] 'distance').

As per Greenberg's (1963: 76) three types of languages based on the dominant order of subject (S), object (O) and verb (V), Bodo comes under *type-III* i.e. SOV languages. The word order parameter of Bodo follows the typological properties of V-final (OV) language, which are *tendency to be postpositional*, *relative clause-N*, *adpositional phrase-V*, *manner adverb-V*, *V-tense/aspect auxiliary verb* and *V-negative auxiliary* (Dryer, 1991: 455, 459). Again, it also comes under SV languages because an intransitive subject in this language precedes the verb. It can be thus classified as SV & OV language (ref. Dryer, 1997: 93).

It is a head-final language that employs postpositional words of a wide range of grammatical functions and meanings. The postpositional words in Bodo, which are categorised in this study in terms of their positional distribution in phrases and clauses, function as indications of questions, inclusiveness, exclusiveness, comitative, exhaustiveness, quantity, serialisation of action, mood, causes, promises, adverbials, assertiveness, etc. For examples: [*pʰā(-laì)*] 'interrogative particle', [*síntʰaí*] 'in addition', [*gɯ̀zɯ̀ŋ*] 'more than usual', [*àntʰà*] 'enough', [*pʰàzí(-nɯ́)*] 'alongside', [*kʰɯ̀mà*] 'doubt', [*gɯ̀zā*] 'only', [*kʰɯ̀ɾījà*] 'promise', [*mànì*] 'during', [*pʰàɾsé*] 'towards', [*tʰàkʰaī*] 'for', etc.

The individual words occurring after other elements such as words, phrases or clauses to add some linguistic information to the words, phrases or clauses where they occur are called postpositional words. 'A postpositional word or phrase comes after a word or group of words that it is related to.'[5] Some of the postpositional words in this study are postpositions. According to Crystal (2008: 377), postposition is 'a term used in the grammatical classification of words, referring to the closed set of items which follow noun phrases (or single nouns or pronouns) to form a single constituent of structure. The analogous construction in English involves prepositions. Many languages make regular use of postposed items, e.g. Japanese, Hindi. The word *ago* (e.g. *two years ago*) is also sometimes classified as a postposition.' Another linguistic feature of postpositions is that they are indeclinable and hence they do not take any inflection. This statement can also be validated by Solnit (1986) denying that elements like [*sá*] 'on, upper surface' in the phrase [*àɾáŋgá sá-jaó*] (table on-LOC) 'on the table' are postpositions. On the

[5] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/postpositional retrieved on July 10, 2024.

other hand, Dryer (2008) has a couple of reasons to include location nouns (*localisers,* according to Solnit, are postposition counterparts of prepositions like *up*, *on*, *under*, *near*, *in*, etc.).

This study is not limited to postpositions and it discusses the postpositional words as a whole that follow nominals or noun phrases and verbals or verb phrases. A postpositional word is a syntactically separable element within a syntactic structure i.e. it can stand alone as a free word. However, it is always not obligatory to complete the central meaning of the phrase or clause it occurs with.

2. Literature Review

There is only a little literature on and about the postpositional words used in Bodo and other Bodo-Garo groups of languages. Solnit (1986: 307) discusses about postpositions while introducing the term localisers to explain the subclass of nouns expressing much of the semantic territory of English prepositions like ‘on’, ‘in’, ‘under’, ‘above’, ‘near’, ‘inside’, ‘outside’, ‘front’, ‘back’, etc.

According to Longmailai (2014: 136), the localisers are also called relator nouns which are postpositional in form. Relator nouns and postpositions have complex morphological constructions in Dimasa. Both of them require case marking unless used as reduplicated nouns. They are related to position in space, direction of movement, location in time and causation (ibid: 164-5). Anyway, the postpositions she has discussed are none other than the localisers of Solnit (1986). Longmailai (2014: 371-2) also discusses the word order of postpositions in Dimasa. Again, she has brought a couple of case markers under postposition which she also says are assigned with case markers.

Brahma (2012: 45) discusses about assignment of the genitive case marker in Bodo [*-ni*] with dependent nominal while using a postposition [*tʰàkʰaī*] ‘for’. Again, he also discusses about the use of a dubitative mood particle [*kʰùmà*] ‘may be’ as a postpositional word (ibid: 88).

3. Aims and Objectives

Postpositional words constitute a considerable set of functional words in Bodo. However, it has not been introduced in most of the traditional grammars of the language written in different ages. This study is a fresh research on the topic. And, there is no doubt; this study contributes towards documenting the postpositional words used in this language.

These are the linguistic elements that are often considered to be linguistic devices that make the use of languages very expressive, effective and powerful. This study aims at finding out the postpositional words used in Bodo. The focus is on the positions and the functions of the words. This study also aims at finding out whether the postpositional words are used as particles or as integral linguistic elements.

4. Methodology

The data collected and analysed for this study are introspective as the researcher is a native speaker of the language under study. The elicitation of the postpositional words employed in Bodo is basically through observation of different speech acts in different speech situations especially using the standardised variety of the language known as *Sonabari* (pronounced as [*sùnābàrí*] meaning ‘western’) spoken in the two western districts of BTR i.e. Kokrajhar and Chirang. While observing such speech acts the juncture before the postpositional words are analysed very carefully so that it can be decided that they are used as separate syntactic elements i.e. freely occurring words. Again, their respective postpositional values i.e. post-nominal and post-verbal positions are also observed.

Another method of collecting postpositions in Bodo is manual reading to find out the postpositional words. The researcher went through the *Bodo Text Corpora of Generic, Health and Tourist Domains*[6] of 110K sentences prepared by *Resource Centre for Indian Language Technology Solutions (Phase-II: Assamese & Bodo)*, 2009-11, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, India.

The data had been written down using the International Phonetic Alphabet and then were interlinearised following Leipzig Glossing Rules (May 31, 2015). The formation and origins of the postpositions are also tried to be investigated to analyse their grammatical and lexical relevance.

The elicited data are presented in the form of sentences where the postpositional words occur. Usually, the sentences are taken as they have been found while eliciting the data. However, some of the sentences are formed by me using my knowledge as a speaker of the language.

5. Data and Findings

This linguistic investigation comes across sixteen postpositional words (PW) employed in the Bodo language, which are given in *Table 1*.

SN	*PW*	*Gloss(s)*	*Function(s)*
(1)	[*pʰā(-laì)*]	question particle	interrogative
(2)	[*síntʰaí*]	also; too	inclusive
(3)	[*gɯ̀zɯ̀ŋ*]	more than usual/enough	quantifier
(4)	[*àntʰà*]	less but enough	quantifier
(5)	[*nàmà*]	question particle; question with doubt	interrogative; dubitative question
(6)	[*gɯ̀zā*]	only (and nothing else)	exclusive
(7)	[*kʰɯ̀mà*]	doubt	dubitative
(8)	[*kʰɯ̀ɾīĵà(-bɯ̀)*]	let the boil of sin blast	promise(-EMPH)
(9)	[*gàhàm*]	more than usual/enough	quantifier
(10)	[*àɾɯ̀mà*]	assertiveness	assertive
(11)	(a) [*mànì*]	during; while	simultaneous action
	(b) [*māní*]	wholly; also, too	inclusive
(12)	[*pʰàzí(-nɯ́)*]	alongside	consecutive but interlaced action
(13)	[*tʰàkʰaī*]	for	benefactive
(14)	[*pʰàɾsé*]	towards	illative
(15)	[*baídí*]/[*bádí*]	like	comparer
(16)	[*lɯ̀gɯ̀sé*]	along with	comitative

***Table 1**: Postpositional words in Bodo*

[6] The researcher is involved in the development of the corpora.

It is convenient to discuss them under two broad categories- *particle postpositional words* and *integral postpositional words* based on their minor and major functions, respectively. The former are optionally employed or may be substituted with other linguistic features like intonation, whereas the latter are obligatorily employed in the language.

5.1 Particle postpositional words

The postpositional words that have minor grammatical or lexical meanings whose absence does not affect the central meaning of a syntactic construction are categorised as particle postpositional words. The particle postpositional words in Bodo are- [*pʰā(-laì)*], [*síntʰaí*], [*gùzùŋ*], [*àntʰà*], [*nàmà*], [*gùzà*], [*kʰùrījà(-bù)*], [*mānī*], [*gàhàm*], [*àrùmà*] and [*lùgùsé*].

5.1.1 [*pʰā(-laì)*]

It is a question word that follows an interrogative/exclamatory clause. This particle can be used as [*pʰā*] in short and also as [*pʰā(-laì)*]; when [*pʰā*] is used, the intonation feature of the clause where it occurs is prominent (*Figure 1*), whereas the first syllable /*pʰa*/ in [*pʰā.laì*] is used with lax intonation (*Figure 2*). e.g.-

(1a) *bɔ̀há* *tʰáŋ-nú* ***pʰā***
where go-INF **QP**
'Where are/do (you) going/go**?**'
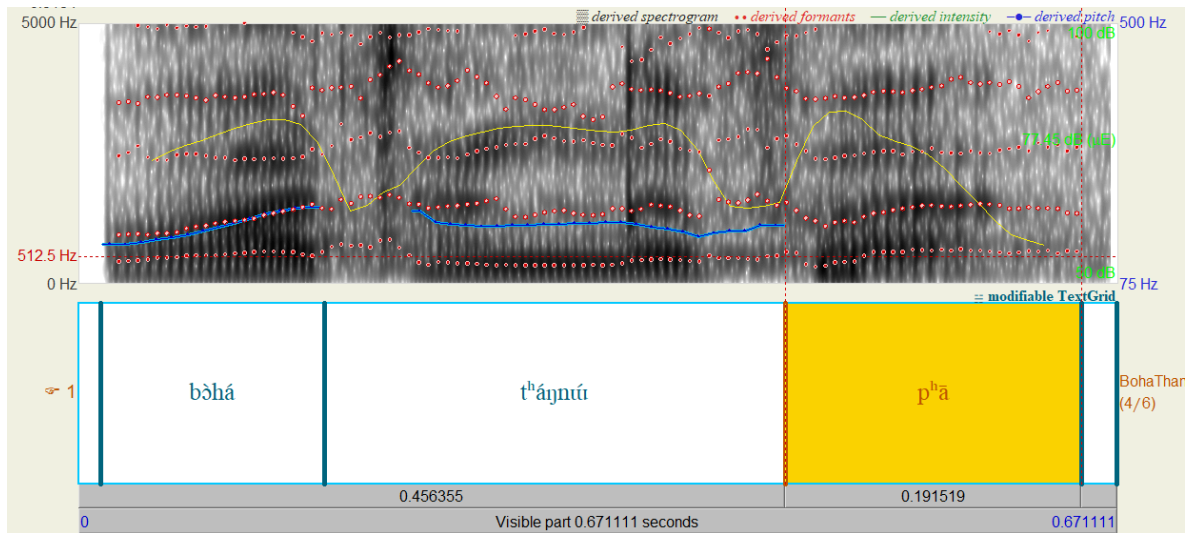
***Figure 1**: Intonational representation of (1a).*

(1b) *bɔ̀há* *tʰáŋ-nú* ***pʰālaì***
where go-INF **QP**
'Where are/do (you) going/go**?**'
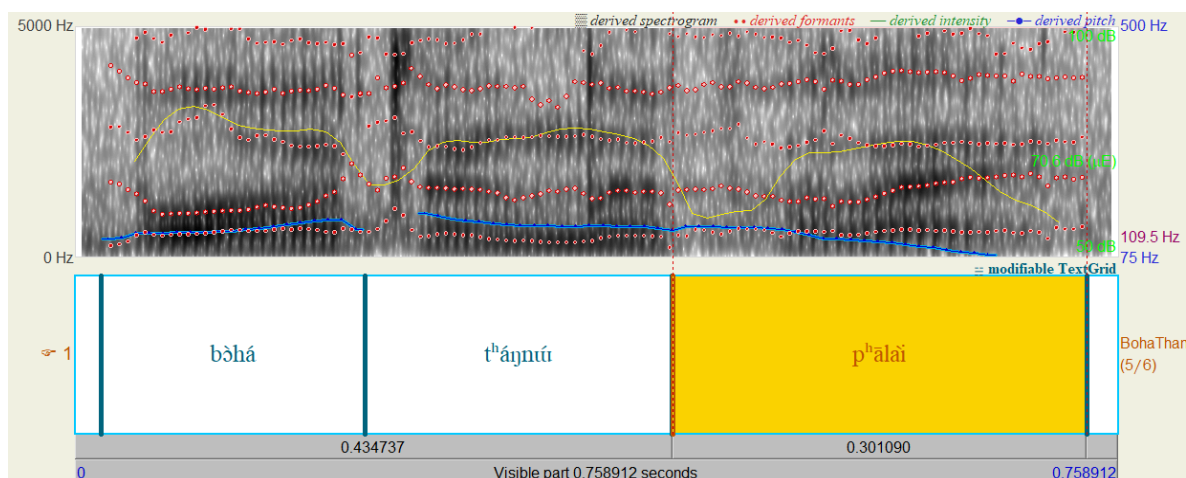
***Figure 2**: Intonational representation of (1b).*

5.1.2 [*síntʰai*]

It is an inclusive particle which means 'also, too'. It occurs after nominals and adverbials. Usually, there is an inclusive suffix [-*bɯ*] with the same meaning, which also occurs with nominals. However, [*síntʰai*] carries an additional feature of *focus*. For example-

(2a) *bìtʰáŋ-á* *lámá* ***síntʰaí*** *síb-pʰá-dúŋ-múŋ*
3SG.HON-NOM road **INCL(.FOC)** sweep-along-PFV-PST
'S/he swept **even** the road.'

(2b) *bì-jù* *dèntʰá* *síntʰaí* *zá-zúb-dúŋ-múŋ*
3SG-NOM stalk INCL(.FOC) eat-finish-PFV-PST
'S/he ate even the stalk.' (e.g.- along with fruit)

5.1.3 [*gùzùŋ*]

This postpositional word means 'more than usual' is a quantifying particle occurring with numerals. It indicates the excessive number or amount of the objects expressed by the quantified noun, by occurring after the numeral. For example-

(3a) *zùŋ-nao* *dàkʰálí* *sà-bá*
1PL-GEN.LOC the.day.before.yesterday CLF-five
gùzùŋ *àlásí* *pʰuì-dùŋ-mùŋ*
more.than.usual guest come-PFV.PST
'We had such a number of five guests the day before yesterday.'

(3b) *àŋ* *dìnuī* *kʰèb-nuī* *gùzùŋ* *dùguí-baī*
1SG today MLT-two more.than.usual bathe-PRF
'I have taken my bath two time today (unusually).'

5.1.4 [*àntʰà*]

It is a quantifier particle which means 'less but enough'. It follows an infinitive verb and at the same time precedes the finite verb. For example-

(4a) *àŋ* *ùkʰúi-gā-nù* *àntʰà* *ùŋkʰám* *zá-baí*
1SG become.hungry-cease-INF less.but.enough rice eat-PRF
'I have eaten less but enough rice. (*Lit.*)'

(4b) *àpʰā-jā* *mēŋ-gā-nū* *àntʰà* *ùndū-dūŋ-mūn*
my.father-NOM become.tired-cease-INF less.but.enough sleep-PFV-PST
'My father slept for a while but enough to get rid of his tiredness. (*Lit.*)'

Example (4a) may be reduced to [*ùkʰúigānù àntʰà zá*] and [4b] to [*mēŋgānū àntʰà ùndū*] to check the inter-verbal occurrence of [*àntʰà*].

Again, as it can be observed, the verb [*gā*] 'cease' usually co-occurs with the preceding infinitive verb.

5.1.5 [*nàmà*]
It is used at the end of an SOV clause to express yes-no question or doubt. For example-

(5a) *bī-jū* *sɔ̀ŋpʰúɾ* *pʰɯì-gùn* *nàmà*
3SG-NOM the.day.after.tomorrow come-FUT QP
'Is s/he coming the day after tomorrow?'

(5b) *bī-jū* *sɔ̀ŋpʰúɾ* *pʰɯì-gùn* *nàmà*
3SG-NOM the.day.after.tomorrow come-FUT DUB
'S/he might be coming the day after tomorrow.'

The above couple of examples give an ambiguous sentence which has two different linguistic meanings. The difference between these two meanings is understood with the difference in their intonation; the interrogative [*nàmà*] is assigned with interrogative intonation whereas the dubitative [*nàmà*] is assigned with dubitative intonation.

5.1.6 [*gùzā*]
It is used after a nominal which indicates exclusive and it lexically means 'only (and nothing else; without any other else)'. For example-

(6a) *sà* *gùzā* *lùŋ-sáb-dú*
tea EXCL drink-ADVL-IMPP
'Have tea (only tea and nothing else).'

(6b) *ùŋkʰám* *gùzā* *zá-sáb-dú*
riceEXCL eat-ADVL-IMPP
'Have rice (only).'

[*gùzā*] is a particle which is not necessary to complete the sentence grammatically. It co-occurs with an adverbial verb suffix [*-sáb*] that means something like 'lightly (not seriously)'. However, either of them can substitute the other. Thus, the following sentences are also grammatically correct:

(6c) *sà* *lùŋ-sáb-dú*
tea drink-ADVL-IMPP
'Have tea (only tea and nothing else).'

(6d) *ùŋkʰám* *zá-sáb-dú*
riceeat-ADVL-IMPP

‘Have rice (only).’

5.1.7 [*k^{h}ùmà*]

It is a dubitative mood marker that expresses a kind of epistemic information. For example-

(7a) *ànzàd-à* *t^{h}àb-nù* *zà-gùn* *k^{h}ùmà*
examination-NOM shortly-PTL happen-FUT DUB
‘The examination might commence shortly.’

(7b) *àp^{h}à-jà* *gàbùn* *p^{h}ɯì-gùn* *k^{h}ùmà*
my.father-NOM tomorrow come-FUT DUB
‘My father might come tomorrow.’

The dubitative mood suffix [*-gún*] with the same linguistic value is also present in the language, which can replace this postpositional word. For example-

(7c) *ànzàd-à* *t^{h}āb-nū* *zà-gūn-gún*
examination-NOM shortly-PTL happen-FUT-DUB
‘The examination might commence shortly.’

Both [*k^{h}ùmà*] and [*-gún*] occur at the end of a clause if the clause is in basic word order parameter i.e. SVO.

5.1.8 [*k^{h}ùɾīјà(-bù)*]

It is a noun substituted from the verb phrase [*k^{h}ùɾīјà bèɾt^{h}úŋ*] ‘let the boil of sin inflame in my skin’. [*k^{h}ùɾīјà*] is a kind of boil of sin whereas [*bèɾt^{h}úŋ*] is the optative form of [*bèɾ*] ‘blast’; [*-t^{h}úŋ*] is the optative suffix. There is a folk belief among the Bodos that if someone tells a lie then a boil of sin inflames in his/her skin. Therefore, this has been a kind of promise that one makes to confirm that s/he has spoken the truth. Thus, the use of this postpositional word is a way of making a promise. Eventually, the word [*k^{h}ùɾīјà*] has been grammaticalised. For example-

(8a) *àŋ* *núŋ-k^{h}ɯó* *nú-máɾ-á-k^{h}ɯí-lɯí* *k^{h}ùɾīјà(-bù)*
1SG 2SG-ACC see-REAL-NEG-NEG.PRF-MASCP PROMISE(-EMPH)
‘I promise, I really didn’t see you.’

(8b) *àŋ* *k^{h}aò-wà-k^{h}ɯī-haī* *k^{h}ùɾīјà(-bù)*
1SG steal-NEG-NEG.PRF-FEMP PROMISE(-EMPH)
‘I promise, I did not steal (it).’

Another word [*sɔìt^{h}ībū*] derived through borrowing the Assamese word [*ħɔitjɔ*] ‘true’ and suffixing the inclusive focus particle [*-bu*] is also used instead of this postpositional word. For example-

(8c) *àŋ-naò* *ɾàŋ* *gɯī-jā-lɯī* *sɔìt^{h}ī(-bū)*
1SG-GEN.LOC rupee have-NEG-MASCP PROMISE(-EMPH)
‘I promise, I do not have any money (It’s true I have no money.)’

5.1.9 [*gàhàm*]

It follows a quantifying numeral to express that the quantity is ‘more than usual’ or ‘more than enough’. For example-

(9a) *bī-hā* *zɔk^{h}aí-nɯí* *gàhàm*

3SG-POSS	a.unit.of.four-pair(two)	more.than.usual
bíbɔ-bínánaó		*dɔŋ*
his/her.elder.sister-his/her.younger.sister		EXTL

'S/he has such a number of eight sisters.'

(9b)	*làŋpʰāŋ-ā*	*ɔ̀ɾɔ̀nbàɾī-jaō*	*hɔ̀ɾ-tʰām*	*gàhàm*	*tʰā-hɯí-jū*
	PN-NOM	forest-LOC	night-three	more.than.usual	stay-DST-HAB

'Langphang use to stay up to three nights in the forest.'

There is no difference in the meanings and the functions of [*gùzùŋ*] and [*gàhàm*] (ref. 3a-b).

5.1.10 [*àɾùmà*]

The postpositional word [*àɾùmà*] follows an assertive clause to express assertiveness. Its semantic value is null. It is not obligatorily to make a clause assertive; however, its occurrence confirms the assertiveness of the clause or sentence where it occurs. For example-

(10a)	*bītʰáŋ-á*	*gàbùn*	*pʰɯì-gùn*	*àɾùmà*
	3SG.HON-NOM	tomorrow	come-FUT	ASS

'S/he is coming tomorrow.'

(10b)	*bī-jú*	*zè-kʰɯō-bū*	*maò-nū*	*hājū*	*àɾùmà*
	3SG.NOM	any-ACC-INCL	do-INF	hill	ASS

'S/he can do anything.'

5.1.11 [*mānī*]

It indicates an extended amount or inclusion of the thing referred to. It means 'wholly; also, too'. For example-

(11a)	*dìnɯì*	*pʰùŋ-sé*	*mānī́*	*ɔ̀kʰá*	*hà-dùŋ*
	today	morning-one	wholly	rain	FALL-PFV

'Today, it's raining whole the morning.'

(11b)	*mùsɯò-wà*	*plàstʰìk(-kʰɯò)*	*mānī́*	*zá-zúb-baí*
	cow-NOM	plastic(-ACC)	also	eat-finish-PRF

'The cow has eaten up even the plastic.'

In (11b), the postpositional word [*mānī*] expresses the same meaning as [*síntʰai*] in (2a-b) as it functions here as inclusive particle. They are interchangeably used in the language. Thus, the sentence [*mùsɯò-wà plàstʰìk síntʰaí zá-zúb-baí*] also expresses the same meaning as (11b). However, they are not interchangeably used in different paradigmatic structures. For example- it cannot replace [*mānī*] in (11a) and make a sentence like [**dìnɯì pʰùŋ-sé síntʰaí ɔ̀kʰá hà-dùŋ*] as [*síntʰaí*] cannot be preceded by a numeral. If the numeral [*sé*] is removed from (11a), then it can replace [*mānī*] as in (11c).

(11c)	*dìnɯì*	*pʰùŋ(-aò)*	*síntʰaí*	*ɔ̀kʰá*	*hà-dùŋ*
	today	morning(-LOC)	INCL(.FOC)	rain	FALL-PFV

'Today, it's raining even in the morning.'

However, the meaning is affected due the interchange of the postpositional words. Though these postpositional words have the corresponding meanings, their meanings depend on the preceding constituents; if the preceding constituent is an adverbial, it indicates additional time or

place (adjunct) and, if it is a nominal it indicates an additional or inclusive argument (subject or object). More examples are given below:

(11d) *bī-zūŋ* *bīnānaō* *mānī/síntʰaí* *pʰɯì-pʰā-dūŋ-mūn*
3SG-INS his/her.sister INCL(.FOC) come-COM-PFV-PST
'Even his/her sister came with him/her.'

(11e) *maòzí-jā* *gaīkʰér-zūŋ* *nā* *sú* *mānī/síntʰaí* *zā-pʰā-jū*
cat-NOM milk-INS fish bone INCL(.FOC) eat-COM-HAB
'The cat eats even fish bones along with milk.'

In case of the preceding nominals as arguments, the postpositional words employ comitative marker [*-pʰa*] with the main verb as in (11d-e) to express the comitative action. Elsewhere, such comitative suffixes do not occur. For example-

(11f) *gɔ̀slā* *gùdān* *mūn-blā* *gɔ̀tʰɔ́-wā* *hɔ̀ɾ(-aò)*
shirt new get-SUBJ child-NOM night(-LOC)
mānī/síntʰaí *pʰɔ̀raīsālī-jaō* *tʰā̃ŋ-nū* *nàgīɾ-ū*
INCL(.FOC) school-LOC go-INF wish-HAB
'The child wishes to go to the school even at night when s/he gets new shirt. (*Lit.*)'

(11g) *dìnɯì* *mùnā-jaō* *mɯīdéɾ-ā* *nɔ̄*
today night-LOC elephant-NOM house
(síŋ)-aō *mānī/síntʰaí* *hàb-pʰɯí-dúŋ-mún*
(inside)-LOC INCL(.FOC) enter-PROX-PFV-PST
'Today night, the elephant entered even in(side) the house. (*Lit.*)'

5.2 Integral postpositional words

The postpositional words that have integral grammatical or lexical meanings whose absence affects the central meaning of a syntactic construction are integral postpositional words. The integral postpositional words in Bodo are- [*pʰàzí(-nú)*], [*tʰàkʰaī*], [*pʰàɾsé*], [*mànì*] and [*baídí*].

5.2.1 [*pʰàzí(-nú)*]

It is an integral postpositional word which expresses a consecutive but interlaced action alongside another action. This particle has its root form [*pʰàzí*] which often takes the emphatic particle [*-nù*]. For example-

(12a) *àbìɾ-à* *nɔ́-waó* *tʰáŋ-naí* *pʰàzí(-nū)* *zùŋ-naò* *hab̀-láŋ-dúŋ-mún*
PN-NOM home-LOC go-NOML alongside(-EMPH) 1PL-GEN.LOC enter-DST-PFV-PST
'Abir dropped in at our place while going home.'

(12b) *àdá-já* *maòkʰɔ̄-waō* *tʰāŋ-naī*
my.elder.brother-NOM office-LOC go-NOML
pʰàzí(-nū) *hātʰaí-jaó* *tʰáŋ-dúŋ-mún*
alongside(-EMPH) market-LOC go-PFV-PST
'My elder brother went to the market while going to the office.'

5.2.2 [*tʰàkʰaī*]

It occurs after a nominal; it is a postpositional word in Bodo, which is equivalent to the preposition for. It is always preceded by the genitive case marker [-*ni*] which occurs with the preceding nominal. For example-

(13a)	*aí-ja*	*àŋ-nì*	*tʰàkʰaī*	*zùbùd*	*dùkʰu*	*sɔ̀haì-nàŋ-dùŋ-mùn*
	my mother-NOM	ISG-GEN	for	very	sorrow	tolerate-need-PFV-PST

‘My mother suffered a lot for me.’

(13b)	*nūŋ-súɾ*	*gàbūn-nī*	*tʰàkʰaī*	*tʰījāɾí*	*zà*
	2SG-PL	tomorrow-GEN	for	ready	be(come)

‘Get ready for tomorrow.’

5.2.3 [*pʰàɾsé*]

It occurs with nominals. It has the same meaning as the English preposition towards. If the preceding nominals are [+animate, +movable] then they take the genitive case suffix [-*ni*] as in (14a); whereas, in case of nominals they do not take the genitive case suffix [-*ni*] suffix as in (14b).

(14a)	*mùsá-já*	*àŋ-nì*	*pʰàɾsé*	*kʰáɾ-bú-dúŋ*
	tiger-NOM	ISG-GEN	towards	run-PROX-PFV

‘The tiger is running towards me. (*Lit.*)’

(14b)	*kʰɔ̀ntʰaīgìɾī-jā*	*bìpʰāŋ*	*pʰàɾsé*	*naì-hɔ̄ɾ-nā*
	poet-NOM	three	towards	look-DST-NF
	dùŋ-sē	*kʰɔ̀ntʰaī*	*līɾ-dūŋ-mūn*	
	CLF-one	poem	write-PFV-PST	

‘The poet wrote a poem looking towards the three.’

(14c)	*bī-jū*	*kʰùlà*	*pʰàɾsé*	*ágán*	*sùɾ-dùŋ*
	3SG-NOM	south	towards	step	MOVE-PFV

‘S/he is moving towards the south. (*Lit.*)’

The word [*pʰàɾsé*] is also used as a location noun or localiser as in [*bèɾá pʰàɾsé-tʰíŋ*] (wall side-one-ILL) ‘on the other hand’ where it takes the illative case marker [-*tʰiŋ*]. Of course, as it has been formed from the bound root [*pʰaɾ*] ‘side’, it is also used as a classifier for hands, ears, eyes, legs, nostrils which have left and right references. It can also replace the illative case marker [-*tʰiŋ*] as in [*mùsá-já àŋ-nì-tʰìŋ kʰáɾ-bú-dúŋ*] (≈14a).

5.2.4 [*baídí*]/[*bádí*]

It is a postposition which is equivalent to the English preposition like. It is used as a simile particle as it compares another noun with the comparer noun it immediately follows. For example-

(15a)	*àŋ-nì*	*ɔ̀nzálí-ní*	*mɔ̀hɔ̀ɾ-à*	*bìbáɾ*	*baídí/bádí*
	1SG-GEN	beloved-GEN	appearance-NOM	flower	like

‘My love is like a flower.’

(15b)	*dìnuī*	*ɔ̀kʰā*	*dùmuí-nā(-nuí)*	*sàn-aō-nú*
	today	rain	BECOME.CLOUDY-NF	day-LOC-EMPH
	hɔ̀ɾ baídí/bádí	*zà-dùŋ*		

night like be(come)-PFV
'Due to the cloudy/rainy weather the day seems like night today. (*Lit.*)'

It is also optionally used as a suffix to the corresponding nominal or clause.

5.2.5 [*lùgùsé*]
[*lùgùsé*] is used to express different meanings in different linguistic constructions and they are used as particles and integrals as well. Usually, it is used to mean a wide range of comitative functions that correspond to the instrumental or other related cases. It may be used as a particle as in (16a) and as an integral element as in (16b) below-

(16a) *àŋ* *núŋ-zúŋ* *lùgùsé* *zìɾaì-gùn* (Particle)
1SG 2SG-INS along.with rest-FUT
'I will sit (rest) along with you.'

(16b) *bī-jū* *àŋ-zùŋ* *lùgùsé* *bú-zá-gún* (Integral)
3SG-NOM 1SG-INS along.with beat-PASS-FUT
'S/he will be beaten along will me.'

In (16a), [*lùgùsé*] is redundant as it repeats the same linguistic function as that of the comitative function of the instrumental case marker [-*zuŋ*] co-occurring with [*núŋ*]. However, depending on the semantic feature (±human or ±agentive) of the noun it co-occurs, the function of [*lùgùsé*] may vary. For example-

(16c) *bī-sūɾ-ū* *daó-zúŋ* *lùgùsé* *ùŋkʰám* *zá-dúŋ* (Integral)
3-PL-NOM bird-INS along.with rice eat-PFV
'They are eating rice along with the bird (Both they and the bird are eating together).'

(16d) *bī-sūɾ-ū* *daó-zúŋ* *ùŋkʰám* *zá-dúŋ*
3-PL-NOM bird-INS cooked.rice eat-PFV
'They are eating rice with chicken (>They are eating rice and chicken).'

In (16c), the noun [daó] is [+agentive] (a living being) due to the use of [*lùgùsé*] whereas it becomes [-agentive] (a kind of food) in (16d) due to the absence of it.

(16e) *bī-jū* *ùŋkʰám-zúŋ* *lùgùsé* *duì* *lùŋ-dùŋ*
3SG-NOM cooked.rice-INS along.with water drink-PFV
'S/he is drinking water (along) with rice.'

(16f) *bī-jū* *ùŋkʰám-zúŋ* *duì* *lùŋ-dùŋ*
3SG-NOM cooked.rice-INS water drink-PFV
'S/he is drinking water with rice.'

[*ùŋkʰám*] is [-agentive] and therefore, if the postpositional word [*lùgùsé*] co-occurs with it does not indicate any comitative role at all. Thus, the co-occurrence of it with a [-agentive] noun is optional; even, it is redundant to use it.
Again, in (16b), if [*lùgùsé*] is dropped, it would have a different meaning as in (16g).

(16g) *bī-jū* *àŋ-zùŋ* *bú-zá-gún*
3SG-NOM 1SG-INS.AGTV beat-PASS-FUT
'S/he will be beaten by me.'

The postpositional word co-occurring with the agentive argument in (16b) affects it in a passive construction. It can be observed that [*lùgùsé*] is always preceded by the instrumental case [-*zuŋ*] (16a across 16e). In a passive construction, it expresses the comitative features where the agent and patient are combined to a complex patient.

5.2.6 [*mànì*]

It indicates a period of a simultaneous temporal moment when two different actions co-occur hand in hand. It means 'during; while'. For example-

(17a)	*pʰùɾùŋgiɾi*	*pʰɯì-gɯò*	*mànì*	*zùŋ*	*gélé-dúŋ*
	teacher	come-until	while	3PL	play-PFV

'We are playing as (while) the teacher is coming.'

(17b)	*ùŋkʰām-ùŋkʰɾī*	*mùn-gɯò*	*mànì*	*dɔ̀sē*	*ɾaì-zlaī-nī*	*pʰɯì*
	cooked.rice-curry	ripen-until	while	a.moment	speak-REC-COHRT	come

'Let's talk as (while) the food is cooking.'

It is worth mentioning here that the other variant of it [*mānī*] (see §5.1.11) is also employed after a nominalised verb to indicate inclusiveness as in (17c-d):

(17c)	*kʰɔ̀ɾɔ́*	*gùsūm*	*nū-naī*	*mānī*	*mānsí*
	head	black	see-NOML	INCL(.FOC)	human

'All who have black head are human. (*Lit.*)'

(17d)	*gùbaō*	*sɔ̀m*	*ùkʰɯí-nā*	*gɔ̀tʰɔ̄-wā*	*hā-naī*	*mānī*	*zā-dūŋ-mūn*
	long	time	become.hungry-NF	child-NOM	can-NOML	INCL(.FOC)	eat-PFV-PST

'After starving for long the child ate as much as s/he can.'

This kind of use of [*mānī*] is integral and the postpositional word [*síntʰaí*] cannot replace it in this environment.

6. Discussion

Postpositional words may also be discussed in relation with prepositions and case endings. However, there are positional and lexico-grammatical differences between these three different categories. Postpositional words most often appear to express a wide range of grammatical functions. On the other hand, prepositions are the words governing and usually preceding respective nominals and expressing their relations to other words or elements in a phrase or a clause. And, case endings are those suffixes assigned to head or dependent nominals by the corresponding governing verbs or other nominals and very rarely to the governing verbs to express their relations to other words or elements that co-occur in a phrase or a clause. Thus, the grammatical functions of prepositions and case endings are identical in most cases except the core case endings which have different thematic roles in the respective clauses they occur. As for the difference between postpositional words on one side and the prepositions and case endings on the other side, it can be said that the former are most usually used as less functional whereas the latter are more functional. However, postpositional words are used to express a wider range of linguistic meanings than prepositions and case endings. The presence of postpositional words in a language makes it very expressive too.

Based on the different kinds of occurrences of the postpositional words in Bodo, the different structures of postpositional phrases in Bodo are shown in ***Figure 1 & 2***:
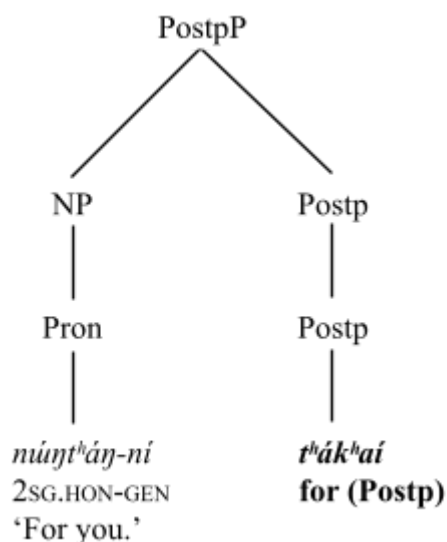
Figure 3*: Structure-1 of PostpP*
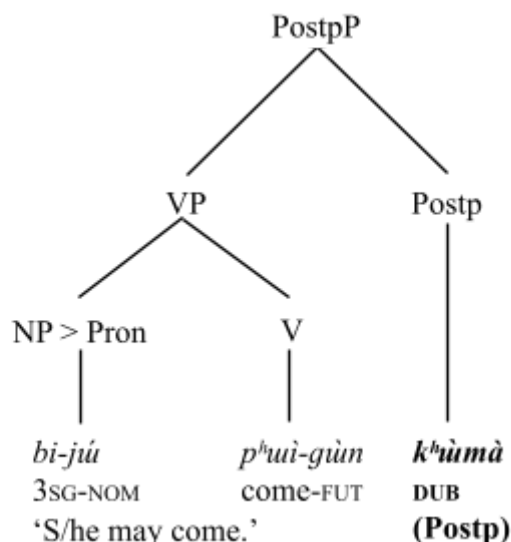
Figure 4*: Structure-2 of PostpP*

As shown in ***Figure 3*** *and* ***Figure 4***, a postpositional word can occur after a noun phrase (*Structure-1*) or a verb phrase/clause (*Structure-2*). The particle postpositional words are dependent on the co-occurring elements whereas they function as head if they are used as integral postpositional words. However, the two different figures that indicate the syntactic distribution of the postpositional words do not match the classification of 'particle postpositional words' and 'integral postpositional words'. Out of the sixteen postpositional words, the tonal variants [*mànì*] and [*māni*] which mean 'during; while' and 'wholly; also' respectively may be categorised as particle and integral (see §5.1.11 and §5.2.6). Again, [*gùzùŋ*] and [*gàhàm*] are freely interchangeable, whereas [*síntʰai*] and [*māni*] are interchangeable in certain environments (see §5.1.11).

The appropriate positions of postpositional words in Bodo are shown in *Table 2*.

SN	*Postpositional word*	*Position(s)*
(1)	[*pʰā(-laì)*]	Post-clausal (Post-verbal)
(2)	[*síntʰai*]	Post-nominal
(3)	[*gùzùŋ*]	Post-nominal
(4)	[*àntʰà*]	Post-verbal; Inter-verbal/clausal
(5)	[*nàmà*]	Post-clausal
(6)	[*gùzā*]	Post-nominal
(7)	[*kʰùmà*]	Post-clausal
(8)	[*kʰùrījà(-bù)*]	Post-clausal
(9)	[*gàhàm*]	Post-nominal

(10)	[*àɾùmà*]	Post-clausal
(11)	(a) [*mànì*]	Post-verbal; Inter-verbal/clausal
	(b) [*mānī*]	Post-nominal; Post-verbal; Post-clausal
(12)	[*pʰàzí(-nú)*]	Inter-clausal (Post-verbal)
(13)	[*tʰàkʰaī*]	Post-nominal
(14)	[*pʰàɾsé*]	Post-nominal
(15)	[*baídī*]/[*bádī*]	Post-nominal
(16)	[*lùgùsé*]	Post-nominal

***Table 2**: Different positions of the postpositional words in Bodo*

As per the positions of the postpositional words, [*àntʰà*] (SN 4), [*mànì*] (SN 11a), and [*pʰàzí(-nú)*] (SN 12) are found to be occurring inter-clausally. In this case, they occur after their corresponding clauses. At the same time, they function as connectors as they combine two different clauses. Another structure of postpositional phrases where the postpositional word occurs inter-verbal or inter-clausal has been shown in ***Figure-5***.
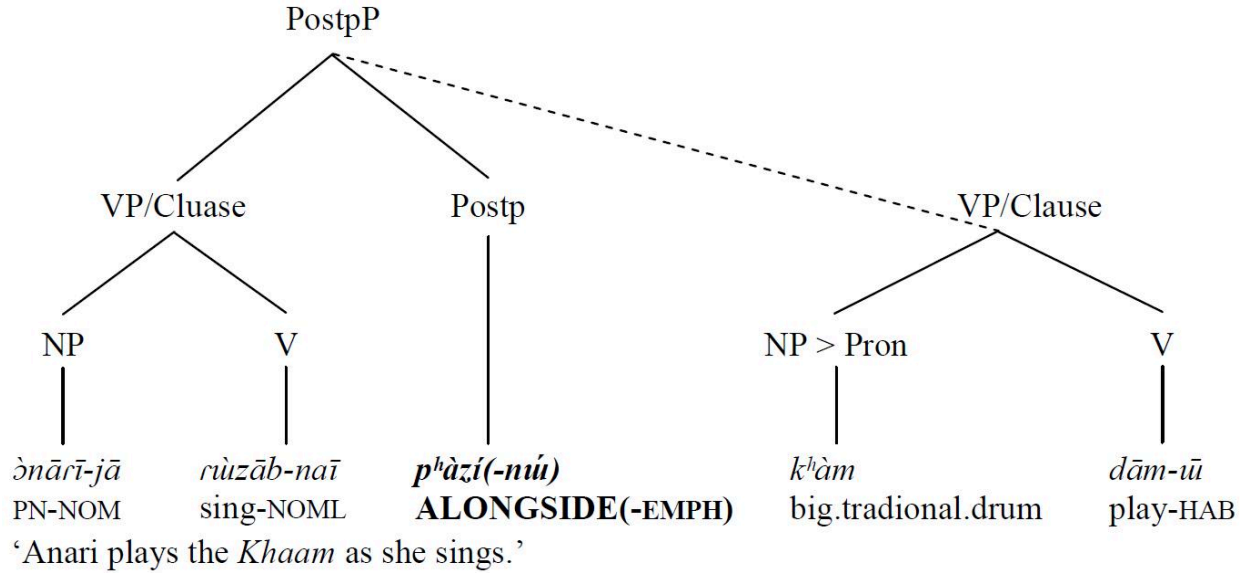
***Figure 5**: Structure-3 of PostpP*

In the postpositional phrase in ***Figure-5***, the postpositional word [*pʰàzí(-nú)*] indicates a simultaneous action which follows it.

As observed in *Table-2*, the postpositional words may be categorised as post-nominal and post-verbal or post-clausal based on their different occurring environments.

6.1 Post-nominal postpositional words

The postpositional words- [*síntʰaí*], [*gùzùŋ*], [*gùzā*], [*gàhàm*], [*mānī*], [*tʰàkʰaī*], [*pʰàɾsé*], [*baídī*]/[*bádī*] and [*lùgùsé*] occur post-nominally.

[*síntʰai*] is always preceded by an argument which may be a subject, an object, or an indirect object/benefactor. For example-

(18a)	*àŋ*	*ūkʰɯī-hāb-nā*	*ūŋkʰám*	*gèsaō-kʰɯō*	*síntʰaí*	*zā-dūŋ-mūn*
	1SG	become.hungry-INTS-NF	cooked.rice	rotten-ACC	INCL(.FOC)	eat-PFV-PST

'I ate even the rotten rice as I was so hungry.'

(18b)	*zùŋ-hā-nī*	*maì-kʰɯò*	*hàgrā-nī*	*ɔ̀mā-jā*	***síntʰaí***	*zā-lāŋ-baī*
	1PL-POSS-GEN	paddy-ACC	forest-GEN	pig-NOM	**INCL(.FOC)**	eat-DST-PRF

'Even the wild pig has eaten our paddy.'

As it can be observed in (18b), the use of the postpositional word [*síntʰai*] with the subject changes the word order of the sentence from the basic SOV into OSV.

(18c)	*gaòdàŋ-à*	*pʰùzā-jaō*	*bībaījārī-nū*	***síntʰaí***	*zī*	*baī-ū*
	PN-NOM	puja-ACC	beggar-DAT	**INCL(.FOC)**	cloth	purchase-HAB

'Gaodang purchases clothes even for beggars in puja.'

[*gùzùŋ*] and [*gàhàm*] always follow numerals (see §5.1.3) which either quantify a countable noun (as in 3a) or multiply an action (as in 3b). Usually, the numeral precedes the corresponding countable noun and the multiplied action. In such a case, these postpositional words follow the numerals immediately i.e. they occur in between the numeral and the noun or the multiplied action (as in 3a-b). Again, when the numeral follows the corresponding noun, then also these postpositional words immediately follow the numeral. For example-

(18d)	*zùŋ-nao*	*dàkʰálí*	*àlásí*	*sà-bá*
	1PL-GEN.LOC	the.day.before.yesterday	guest	CLF-five
	gùzùŋ/gàhàm	*pʰɯì-dùŋ-mùn*		
	more.than.usual	come-PFV.PST		

'We had such a number of five guests the day before yesterday.'

However, a multiplying numeral always precedes the corresponding multiplied action which always appears in the form of a verb.

[*gùzā*] always follows the bare form of nouns (as in 6a-b). [*māni*] usually occurs after nouns and noun phrases. However, if the noun is quantified with a preceding or following attributive numeral, it follows the numeral immediately.

[*tʰàkʰaī*] is always preceded by a nominal marked with the genitive case marker [-*ni*]. [*pʰàrsé*] follows nominals marked with and without the genitive case marker [-*ni*] (see §5.2.3).

[*baídī*]/[*bádī*] always occurs after the base form of nouns. [*lùgùsé*] always occurs after nominals marked with the instrumental case marker [-*zúŋ*].

6.2 Post-verbal or post-clausal postpositional words

The postpositional words- [*àntʰà*], [*mànì*], [*pʰàzí(-nú)*] and [*pʰā(-laì)*] occur post-verbally and post-clausally. The verbs/clauses preceding these words are either in finite or non-finite/infinitive forms.

[*àntʰà*] always follows infinitive verbs marked with [-*nú*] whereas [*mànì*] is always preceded by finite verbs marked with [-*guò*].

[*pʰàzí(-nú)*] occurs after nominalised verbs marked with [-*nai*]. As the verb preceding it is nominalised, this postpositional word may also be categorised under *post-nominal*.

[*pʰā(-laì)*] is preceded by an infinitive verb marked with [*-nu*], which is equivalent to *to-infinitive* in English. The construction employing this postpositional word usually keeps the finite verb [*nàgíɾ*] 'wish; want' covert in it. For example-

(19a) *bɔ̀há* *tʰáŋ-nú* (*nàgíɾ-dúŋ*) ***pʰā(-laì)***
where go-INF (wish-PFV) **QP**
'Where are/do (you) going/go**?**'

7. Conclusion

Postpositional word is a term coined based on its position of occurrence in a secondary linguistic element such as a phrase, a clause or a sentence. It has not been established as its opposite term preposition and hence there has always been irregular or differentiating definitions of it. However, postpositional words as a set of parts of speech in a language can be looked at and defined on different bases. This study looks at its word order i.e. the place or the syntactic environment where it occurs, function(s) and indeclinable feature(s) to validate it as a postpositional word.

The postpositional words discussed here have a great role in making the language expressive, effective and powerful. There might be another couple of postpositional words in the language, which are not included and discussed here; however, as a native speaker of the language, my experience and knowledge on and about the language allow me to conclude here that there are sixteen postpositional words in Bodo. One of them is monosyllabic; most of them are disyllabic whereas several of them are trisyllabic. Several postpositional words out of these sixteen have their dialectal varieties which may be taken up for further future studies.

The postpositional words discussed here are included in the category of adverbs in the traditional grammars whereas all of these are not adverbs or adverbials by category; a few of them are also quantifiers such as [*àntʰà*] and adjectives such as [*gàhàm*]; whereas one of the postpositional words [*kʰùɾījà*] is from the conjunct verb [*kʰùɾījà bèɾtʰúŋ*]. Still, their syntactic functions are more or less adverbial.

8. Abbreviation

ACC - Accusative Case
ADVL - Adverbial Suffix
AGTV - Agentive
ASS - Assertive
CLF - Classifier
COHRT - Cohortative Mood
CULM - Culmination/Climax Telicity
DST - Distal Deixis
DUB - Dubitative Mood
EMPH - Emphatic
EXCL - Exclusive
EXTL - Existential
FEMP - Feminine Gender particle
FOC - Focus
FUT - Future Tense
GEN - Genitive Case

HAB	-	Habitual Aspect
HON	-	Honorific
IMPP	-	Imperative (Polite)
INCL	-	Inclusive
INF	-	Infinitive
INS	-	Instrumental Case
INTS	-	Intense
Lit.	-	Literally
LOC	-	Locative Case
MASCP	-	Masculine Gender particle
MLT	-	Multiplicative
NEG	-	Negative
NOM	-	Nominative Case
NOML	-	Nominaliser
NP	-	Noun Phrase
PASS	-	Passive Suffix
PFV	-	Perfective Aspect
PL	-	Plural Number
PN	-	Proper Noun
POSS	-	Possessive Case
Postp	-	Postpositional word
PostpP	-	Postpositional Phrase
PRF	-	Perfect Aspect
PROH	-	Prohibitive (Negative)
Pron	-	Pronoun
PROX	-	Proximal Deixis
PRS	-	Present Tense
PST	-	Past Tense
PTL	-	Particle
QP	-	Question Particle
REAL	-	Realis Mood
REC	-	Reciprocal Verb Suffix
SG	-	Singular Number
SN	-	Serial Number
SOV	-	Subject + Object + Verb
SUBJ	-	Subjunctive Mood
TERM	-	Termination/Goal Telicity
V	-	Verb
VP	-	Verb Phrase

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Resonance, Attunement, and Syntax

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A B S T R A C T

This paper initiates a discussion and invites insights on the fact that in different communicative contexts, nucleus of an utterance: a word or a phrase, has resonances that are attuned to different syntactic constructions. It involves phenomena where language users adopt syntactic structures that are familiar or expected in a particular context, contributing to mutual understanding and effective communication. Adopting syntactic structures in specific contexts, reflects native speaker-hearers' attunements to social, cultural, and political practices. Such practices have been a topic of discussion in semantics and pragmatics in existing literature. This paper examines how utterances containing nucleus word or phrase are attuned to syntactic constructions and they are saturated while in consonance, and in dissonance otherwise.

1. **Introduction**:

Language is not only the cornerstone of communication that humans *use* to convey messages, share information, thoughts, beliefs, ideas, and common interests. Rather, it is a naturally sophisticated, hierarchically organized, productive, and useful tool using which humans construct narratives, tell stories, sing a song, and imagine the way they want. Markov et al. (2023) argue that "*language does not exist on its own sake…*" for they say "*the precise nature of language is shaped by the needs of the species (arguably, uniquely H. Sapiens) utilizing it…*". Human language or the language/s *Homo Sapiens* use is designated not merely to achieve certain communicative goals or needs, rather, it develops the multitude of communicative techniques at the same time (Harari 2015).

A successful communication requires the combination and arrangement of certain linguistic and non-linguistic communicative components. Krifka (2006, 2008) argued the knowledge of a mutually shared *Common Ground* or *CG* between the speaker and the hearer, the notion of information packaging are such essential components of a successful communication (c.f., Stalnaker 1978, Lewis 2000). Krifka (2006) analyzed the notion of *information packaging* (c.f., Chafe 1976) in such a model where communication is viewed as a process whereby CG change is continuous. Continuous changes of CG require addition of information to the CG and the participants' knowledge about the same (c.f., Bhadra 2017).

Beaver and Stanley (2024) argue "*information increase is a very public process*" (c.f., Stalnaker 1978, Lewis 2000). On a par with Krifka (2006), Bhadra (2017) states *information*

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updates in the *CG* are continuous and participants involved in communicative activities are aware of it. While discussing the notion of *Information Structure* (IS), Krifka (2006) emphasized on the *component* and *management* of *CG*. Hence, exchanging of information in communication is the addition of information consciously put into the common ground mutually shared by the native speakers and hearers is a *meta practice*[2] a society *practices*[3]. Individuals learn and practice 'social practices' by living in the society, attuned to the societal normativity incontrovertibly. In this sense, social practice is the superset of the set of individual practice. Individual communication, therefore, is affected by *social*, and *political identities* where *shared practices* and *beliefs* are imperative (Beaver and Stanley 2024).

An individual in a society communicates with others assuming or knowing that they share intra-societal, intra-cultural, and intra-political practices, and follow the same societal, cultural, and political normativity. While practicing this normativity is a phenomenon discussed in semantics and pragmatics, I assume a syntactic saturation that leads us to social, cultural practices. That is to say, resonances of certain elements in an utterance are attuned to societal normativity syntactically prior to their semantic and pragmatic consideration.

I present the following utterances to demonstrate how the presumption made in the previous line makes sense. Let us imagine a communicative situation where John asks for water and Mary fetches it for him. Now, John's utterance in (1) and the consecutive action performed by Mary (i.e., Mary fetching water for John) makes sense in a plausible scenario that reflects her social practices.

(1) John: Please, fetch me a glass of water.

In another case, without any reference to a communicative context, John asking for water by uttering (2) is simply incomprehensible;

(2) John: *water.

On a preliminary judgement, we might agree that utterance (2) is illogical, incomplete, and ungrammatical contrary to what we have seen in (1). However, a secondary judgement might lead us to the possibility where utterance (2) makes sense provided that certain contextual/situational requirements are met. This is where the intricacies lie.

First, interpretation of utterances like (2) require contextual reference. Second, contextual/situational references must be mutually shared by the individuals of a society or community as *social practice*. An individual living in a society or community adopts these *social practices* and performs necessary actions accordingly when the situation arises. The consonances of "linguistic" attunements via resonances activate the *practices* the individuals have been performing (i.e., in our presented context, it is Mary performing the *practice* of fetching water for John). Third, the consonances of linguistic attunements to syntactic structures vary across contexts. This assumption raises questions related to selection of syntactic arguments that are more likely to be attuned to each other via the degree of resonances (i.e., there could be more

[2] The word 'metapractice' has been used in the same sense Beaver and Stanley (2024) have used in *The Politics of Language*.

[3] Throughout this paper the word 'practice/practices' has been used in the same sense Beaver and Stanley (2024) have used in *The Politics of Language*.

than one syntactic argument equally qualified to saturate the syntactic structure) thereby economizing the otherwise required Phonetic Form (or PF) of an utterance to a minimum.

Here is how it works in (2); an individual who acts as per the societal normativity, does so because of the cognitive consonances activated when attuned to the utterance of the word 'water'. Hence, it is a requirement of that individual or expected from that individual to perform that particular activity in such and such situations that s/he has been practicing. The required/expected performance attuned to the resonances of the word 'water' reflects harmony between lexical attunements and the syntactic structures around the word 'water'. Such attunement-performance becomes an integral part of the societal, cultural, and political normativity a society *practices* (see Fele 2019, Maynard and Turowetz 2013). While, individual performance, social practices, and attunements to resonances of individual words are systematically addressed in Beaver and Stanley (2024), the present discussion is motivated to address how utterances like (2), repeated here in (3), in communicative contexts, could express sentential expressions like (1) above, repeated here in (4);

(3) John: Water.
(4) John: Please, fetch me a glass of water.

The assumption is that, in communicative context, language users display attunements to constructing syntactic constructions around the resonances of individual "words" before semantic and/or pragmatic consideration. Logical Forms (LFs) of these syntactic constructions play a crucial role in communicative contexts. They are deeply embedded into the attunements to social practices. Individual members in a society are able to act as soon as they come in contact with the resonances of linguistic expressions. Therefore, utterances like (3), in a communicative context, can easily express the content in (4) above or something like (5) below;

(5) Water, please!

It appears to be the case that resonances of utterances like (2/3) above are not attuned to social practices in regular, normal circumstances; they can display cognitive dissonances. In other words, resonances of utterances like (2/3) do not activate the attunements to syntactic structures outside of a communicative context. Or their attunement to contents outside of the communicative context sharply leads to dissonances. Therefore, resonances associated with linguistic elements activate the syntactic attunements, and social practices upon meeting certain circumstantial requirements automatically[4]. But the question is, how?

2. Research Objectives:

The objective of this paper is to highlight the fact that, in communicative contexts, utterance of a word or a phrase is such that it is the nucleus that has resonances. The nucleus resonances are attuned to different syntactic constructions. These syntactic constructions are saturated when they are in consonance, dissonance otherwise. When an individual member of a society acts according to the contextual requirements, s/he does so because of this consonance. The goal of this paper is to examine how people go about nucleus resonance to social practices via syntactic attunement.

[4] The word 'automatically' has been used here for no specific purpose. It simply intends to mean that the process follows without disruptions.

3. Theoretical Background

Current discussion on nucleus word and/or phrase resonance and their attunements from syntactic structures to their societal, cultural, and political *practices* is motivated based on the work of Beaver and Stanley (2024) where they examine how language *use* is a social, cultural, and political phenomenon. Their discussion brings out the fact that in communicative contexts, resonances of different linguistic components (i.e., words, phrases, expressions) are attuned to social, cultural, and political *practices* semantically and pragmatically. I, here, propose that resonances of linguistics expressions; the nucleus words and/or phrases of an utterance, display attunements to different sentence structures as well. And, it is these sentence structures whose LF representations are attuned to social, cultural, and political *practices*.

Jaeggi (2018) describes the essential features of *practices* as "*…habitual, rule-governed, socially significant complexes of inter-linked actions that have an enabling character and through which purposes are pursued*". Haslanger (2018) argues that *practices* are not necessarily "*…frameable in terms of rules…*". Rather, she proposes that *descriptive normativity* is a requirement for a regularity to be a social practice. In a society, "*members of a group take the culture's concepts, scripts, and meanings to be normative for members of the group in the following sense: when encountering others who are similarly socialized, we implicitly begin with the assumption that they will do things in a particular way, taken to be the "right way". We may be surprised or feel entitled or to criticize them if they don't*." (c.f., Beaver and Stanley 2024).

The rules or maintenance of practice, even if they are not "explicitly regulated", Jaeggi (2018), Haslanger (2014, 2018) suggest normativity that defines and constraints *practices* should be viewed at the 'community' level and not at the 'individual' level. Jaeggi (2018) describes the *rule-governed* nature of practices interwoven with their *social significance* (c.f., Beaver and Stanley 2024). By "social significance", she describes *normativities* that define and constraint the *practices* are intrinsically social and they are "*regulated at the level of communities or societies, not by individuals*."

Linguistic expressions of different kinds have effects on the communities or societies that use them. In fact, there are many such linguistic expressions that affect people's political, religious, and cultural ideologies, faiths, and beliefs. We might ask whether it is the specific linguistic expressions that affect people's ideologies, beliefs, and faiths or the resonances of these expressions that are attuned to many different sentences and can activate various social, cultural, and political attunements they would have avoided otherwise. In this paper, we shall see that there are what I assume to be the nucleus words or phrases that are sensitive not only to different practices but also to people's ideologies and the respective consequences. The consequences can be thought of the respective actions people perform under their saturated linguistic attunements. That is to say, this paper argues that resonances of linguistic expressions of different kinds are attuned to social, cultural, and political practices a society or a community and an individual member of that society performs. These attunements reflect how, in different communicative contexts, the *use* of certain linguistic expressions express a complete sense.

4. Research Methodology

This is an empirical study. The data presented in this paper have been collected from native Bangla speakers living in different parts in the state of West Bengal. Being a native speaker of Bangla language, the author's judgement on the validation, and relevancy of the data have been

considered at an intuitive level. Total number of participants were 34; 20 male and 14 female of age group 17 to 28. Initially, data were collected from 11 male and 8 female native Bangla speakers. The data have been cross checked with 9 male and 6 female native speakers.

Initially, the data have been collected from and cross checked by native Bangla speakers in three steps; first was the interview method. In this method, the questions were predetermined. Participants were observed if they performed the desired or required actions upon hearing the utterances. One word (i.e., *jol* meaning 'water', *Embulens* meaning 'ambulance', *Taakaa* meaning 'money', and *mubhi* meaning 'movie') was uttered three times within a couple of minutes of interval. Out of 20 male and 14 female participants, 13 male and 11 female participants performed desired actions upon hearing the uttered words for the first time. 4 male and 2 female participants performed the desired actions when they heard the utterance a second time. 3 male and 1 female participants performed their actions before uttering the intended words.

In the second stage, participants were provided with some communicative contexts and were asked how they would act or what they think should be done in that provided context. The participants responded as the situations were described to them. In the case of calling an ambulance, no utterance from the victim is expected which would otherwise be considered immoral and inhuman activity and all the participants agreed on it. In the case of asking for tea and water, 18 out of 20 male and 9 out of 14 female participants responded that it is the respective location (i.e., tea stalls, at house or office) where native speakers are automatically attuned to "collective practices".

The third stage involved discussion on the consequences if the desired or expected actions were not performed. The responses questioned human behavior, the duty of an individual living in a society or a community, the moral principles, and the ethics. These questions point out certain crucial action-performance we all do in our day-to-day life. It is possible that most of the time, we are not aware of our actions but we also cannot escape from the linguistic influence in our actions as well.

The main argument this paper intends to present is the following; upon hearing linguistic utterances language users are attuned to simpler to complex syntactic expressions before performing actions. Therefore, language users of a particular language intuitively know what their primary duties are as an individual member of that society. Language, language structures, and language not only influence our behavior, actions, reactions but they also shape how we think and perceive the world around us. Religious, drug abuse, violence, boy parts, slang, and politically sensitive linguistic expressions have been intentionally avoided from presenting in this paper. Prior to present the data in this work participants' consents were considered.

5. Data

Understanding each data against a context helps the reader to identify how utterances of different linguistic expressions are attuned to different sentences. They will also have an idea how native speakers of different languages intuitively share a vast understating of the communicative common ground in which many sentential utterances or expressions are deeply rooted under the nucleus words and phrases.

First, let us examine how resonance of the utterance of one single word can be attuned to an entire syntactic construction. That is to say, utterances of one single word can express an entire proposition. Consider the utterance *jol* meaning 'water' and understand how it expresses a sentential meaning in a context.

Context: Imagine a situation in which John feels very thirsty and he is so exhausted that he does not have any energy left, neither his physical strength permits him to utter complete sentences like 'Please, give me some water', or 'May I have some water?' or 'Would you be kind enough to fetch me some water?' or something that requires John to utter a full-fledged grammatical sentence. So, he utters (6);

(6) *jol*
water
Expressing: 'Please, fetch me some water!'

However, John could use a Verb Phrase (VP), *jol daao* 'water, please.' but he is not expected to do so. In the specified context, John believes that his utterance of the Noun (N) *jol* 'water' in (6) suffices the purpose.

Our next example is *khaabaar* meaning 'food' in (7) below.

Context: John feels really hungry. He is very exhausted and badly requires to have some food. But he does not have any energy left, neither his physical strength permits him to utter a completely grammatical, full-fledged sentence asking for food, i.e., 'Please, give me some food', 'May I have some food?' So, he utters (7);

(7) *khaabaar*
food
Expressing: 'Please, give me some food!'

However, John could use a Verb Phrase (VP), *khaabaar daao* 'give me some food, please!' but he is not expected to do so. In the specified context, John believes that his utterance of the Noun (N) *khaabaar* 'food' in (7) suffices the purpose.

Next example is *naam* meaning 'name' in (8) below.

Context: Imagine, in a Bangla class the class teacher points out to one of his students and utters (8) with a rising intonation (↑) which signals the utterance is a question;

(8) *naam*[5] (↑)
name
Expressing: 'What is your name?'

The teacher's utterance in (8) carries the sentential expression 'what is your name?' or 'could you tell me/us your name?'. But the teacher intentionally has used (8) and he believes that the student will understand his intention.

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[5] In a similar communicative context, one might ask *porichOy* 'identity' or *tomaar/aapnaar porichOy* meaning 'what is your identity?' instead of uttering *naam* 'name'. None of these utterances require to be a complete interrogative sentence which the other person is seeking information for.

In the same context, he teacher's utterance could followed by (9) with a rising intonation (↑) which signals the utterance is a question;

(9) *baaRi* (↑)
house
Expressing: 'Where are you from?'

The teacher believes that his utterance in (9) carries the sentential expression 'Where are you from?' and that the student will act accordingly.

Next example is *Embulens* meaning 'ambulance'.

Context: In some unfortunate circumstances, if X meets with an accident or suddenly becomes seriously sick, it would be immoral, unethical to expect a grammatical, full-fledged sentence from her/him. Rather, despite her/him asking for an ambulance, other members are expected to call for an ambulance or take the patient to the nearest healthcare center.

(10) *Embulens*
Ambulance
Expressing: 'Please, call an ambulance!'

Example (10) is sensitive. Yet what is intriguing in it is that neither the patient nor the onlookers are expected to care for a sentence. Rather, they all know that uttering the word 'ambulance' would suffice all the necessary purposes. So, it seems that the linguistic attunement is not only understood syntactically or semantically, they are also embedded in societal, cultural practices.

Next, we can think of another example *TEksi/riksaa* meaning 'taxi/rikshaw'.

Context: Imagine Mary is waiting outside a railway station and looking for a taxi or rikshaw to reach to the destination. Upon seeing running taxis or rikshaws, she might just raise her hand and utter *TEksi/rikSaa* 'taxi/rikshaw' as is shown in (11) below;

(11) *TEksi/riksaa*
taxi/rikshaw
The driver expressing: 'Do you need a taxi/rikshaw?'
The traveler expression: 'Taxi/rikshaw, please wait.'

In the same situation, (11) can be uttered by the driver with a rising intonation *TEksi/riksaa* expressing 'do you need a taxi/rikshaw?' Yet, in neither scenario, uttering a full sentence is not required. Participants involved in the same communicative common ground are automatically attuned to the practices.

Next example was *mubhi* meaning 'movie'.

Context: Sam and Sagarika are at a restaurant having lunch. After finishing, Sagarika utters (12);

(12) *mubhi* (↑)
movie
Expressing: 'Shall we go to the movie now?' or 'Let us go to the movie now.'

Another example is *bhetor-e* meaning 'inside'.

Context: Imagine someone is calling John from outside of his home. John recognizes the voice and utters (13) to express, 'Come, inside.' or 'I am inside (the house)'.

(13) *bhetor-e*
inside-LOC
Expressing: 'I am inside (the house)'. Or 'Come, inside.'

Next, consider a V(erb) *khaa* meaning 'eat' in (14).

Context: John and Mary are standing in front of an ice-cream parlour. Mary utters (14) gazing at the ice-cream parlour;

(14) *khaab-e*
eat-FUT.2
Expressing: 'Would you like to have?' Or, 'Should I get one for you?'

While instances of using single word utterances and the corresponding syntactic structures they are attuned to are ubiquitous, phrasal expressions consisting of two Parts of Speech category elements also carry sentential expressions. Consider the following Determiner, Phrase *du*(*i*) *kaap* meaning 'two cups';

Context: John and Bill visit a tea stall and Bill utters (15);

(15) *du*(*i*) *kaap*
two cups
Expressing: 'Give us two cups of tea'.

Uttering "*Ek kaap*" or "*du*(*i*) *kaap*" instead of

a. *aamaay Ek kaap caa din*
I-ACC one cup tea give-HON.2
Expressing: 'Give me one cup of tea'

or

b. *aamaay/aamaader du*(*i*) *kaap caa din*
I-ACC/we-ACC two cup tea give-HON.2
Expressing: 'Give me/us two cups of tea'.

Bill's utterance of (15) to which not only Bill is syntactically to (a) or (b) but the tea seller too. If the tea seller were not attuned to the syntactic structure the resonances of (15) have created, tea was not served (assuming that John and Bill enjoyed the tea).

Next, we can consider another DP *aamaar Ophis-e* meaning 'in my office'. Consider the following context in which the utterance of the DP is relevant.

Context: John works under the supervision of his boss. Every time there is a syntactic discussion, John is the first candidate come to people's mind. So, his boss shows up at John's cabin and utters (16);

(16) *aamaar Ophis-e*
I-GEN office-LOC
Expressing: '(John) Meet me in my office!'

What is intriguing about this set of data is that every utterance is uninterpretable and unsound when taken without reference to communicative context. And, they carry sentential expressions as soon as contexts are provided. It appears that contextual references help native speakers to get attuned to the social practices (i.e., the respective actions after each utterance) via various syntactic constructions (i.e., the respective "expressing" contents each utterance expresses). So, the claim is that utterances reflecting social practices (and/or individual practices provided that that individual is a member of that society or community) is the result caused by the syntactic constructions they are attuned to. And, they are attuned to these syntactic constructions based on the resonances of the nucleus of the utterances. How do we know what is the nucleus of an utterance?

6. Discussion

We begin our analysis with the following assumptions; first, every utterance in communicative context contains a nucleus. Or, it could so happen that the nucleus (word/phrase) is the utterance in a communicative context. Second, this nucleus has resonances. Third, resonances of a nucleus are attuned to multiple syntactic constructions. These syntactic constructions lead an individual (member of a society) to perform certain actions. So, nucleus → resonances → syntax → social practices (see Icek and Fishbein 1980) seem to be the way an utterance in a communicative context is interpreted and understood by native speakers. Language users not only acquire how to combine two or more linguistic expressions, express their thoughts, beliefs, and cultures, they acquire what, when and why too (Lefringhausen et al. 2019, Markov et al. 2023). But the question raised in the section above is, how do native speakers know what, in an utterance, is the nucleus? In fact, we might ask, what does it mean to say an utterance contains a nucleus? What exactly is a communicative context and how do they interact with each other? The data we have considered suggest all these notions (i.e., nucleus of an utterance, resonances-attunement, and communicative context) go together, work together hand in hand as a single unit, and influence each other. Therefore, in isolation none of them makes sense, as in the context given against each data.

We understand the notion of communicative context as the situation or environment in which communication occurs. It consists of mutually shared common ground knowledge or CG knowledge (Krifka 2006, 2008). In this CG, *ideal native speakers and hearers* are aware of the linguistic contents added in the CG or they can make an educated guess that in such and such context such and such linguistic contents are necessary, even if they are not overtly added into the CG yet. They are also aware of the CG management. Adding contents and their management into the CG is what Krifka (2006, 2008) addresses in *Information Structure* (IS). Native speakers who speak the same language acquire the social norms of language use whereby they intuitively know the contextual demands, the acts they should perform. This awareness, on one hand, reflets what Chomsky (1965) calls *Linguistic Competence* and Hymes (1972) calls *Communicative Competence* of the native speaker-hearers. On the other hand, it also reflects the collective attunements or in Beaver and Stanley (2024)'s term *Collective Effervescence* of the society. This phenomenon reflects a speaker uttering (15) repeated in (17) below;

(17) *du*(*i*) *kaap*
two cup
Literal: 'two cups'.
Expressing: 'Give us two cups of tea'.

or (16) repeated in (18) below;

(18) *aamaar Ophis-e*
I-GEN office-LOC
Literal: 'In my office'.
Expressing: '(John) meet me in my office'.

and the hearer are attuned to the same social (cultural, political, and religious) practices and the norms. It can also be assumed that they speak the same language or a variety of the same language or another language which shares the same societal normativity (see Rudge (2015), Kuang and Bicchieri (2024), Glüer et al. (2024)).

Beaver and Stanley (2024) discuss "*we feel consonance when we are in tune with those around us or those with whom we identify, and dissonance emerges when we are not in tune with them*". The application of the notion of 'consonance' and 'dissonance' can be traced back to tuning with people at linguistic level to tuning with the *use* of language by people. When an individual utters (17) at a tea stall, s/he is inviting the tea seller to get attuned to the social practices the former believes that the latter is aware of. The former believes that his/her utterance in (17) would suffice the purpose and s/he also believes that the latter knows that former's utterance would suffice the purpose. This mutual understanding between the speaker and the tea seller is saturated at the level of syntax before it is reflected in practices. Syntactic saturation of the mutual understanding is triggered by resonances of the speaker's utterance. So, the speaker's utterance at a tea stall establishes the communicative context in which information can be added. Then, at a tea stall, any information that is directly associated with tea or the practice of drinking tea is also associated with how native speakers determine what the nucleus word or phrase is. In (17) above, the DP *du*(*i*) *kaap* meaning 'two cups' is directly associated with the N *caa* meaning 'tea' and its utterance expresses the sentential expression in (19) below;

(19) aamaader du(i) kaap caa din.
I-GEN.PL two cup tea give -HON.2
'Give us two cups of tea'.

Similarly, in the same communicative context, utterance (20) expresses (21);

(20) du-To/Ek-Taa laal
two-CL/one-CL red
Literal: 'two/one red'.
Expressing: 'Give us two/one liquor tea'.

(21) aamaader du-To/Ek-Ta laal caa din
I-GEN.PL two-CL/one-CL red tea give-HON.2
'Give us two/one liquor (red) tea'.

or (22) expresses (23)

(22) Ek-Taa /tinTe dudh
one-CL/three-CL milk
Literal: 'one/three milk'.
Expressing: 'Give us one/three milk tea'.

(23) *aamaader Ek-Taa/ tin-Te dudh caa din*
I-GEN.PL one-CL/three-CL milk tea give-HON.2
'Give us one/three milk tea'.

In (21), the DP *du-To/Ek-Taa laal* meaning 'two/one liquor' is the nucleus given that 'tea' is always served in cups and it may be served without milk as in (21) or with milk as in (22). But note that other items such as biscuits are not directly associated with 'tea' or the practice of drinking tea. However, in different cultural practices biscuits can be served with tea even if there is no linguistic expression used for it in that context. This practice is more common in houses hosting guests. In the same way, John's boss uttering (18) expresses (24);

(24) *aapni aamaar Ophis-e dEkhaa korun*
you-HON.2.SG I-GEN office-LOC see do-HON.2
'You meet me in my office'.

and the boss believes that John knows that his utterance invites John to get attuned to the syntactic construction, that is (24), he intends to express.

In each case, both the speakers and the hearers feel consonance and are attuned to the *practices* they have performed which otherwise would have triggered dissonances. If it were not because of the consonances, the speaker would be required to utter complete grammatical sentences instead of the nucleuses such as (17), (18), (20), and (22). In communicative contexts, mutual knowledge of the CG content and management between the speaker and the hearer/s, their social, cultural, and political practices, expected performances are already present in the common ground. But, none of these are entangled with one another prior to attuning to the resonances of nucleus utterances[6]. Therefore, nucleus utterances have resonances which are attuned to the syntactic constructions and establish the syntactic frame in which syntactic arguments will be added further. As a model, we consider the following instances;

(25) *aamaader du(i) kaap caa din*
I-GEN.PL two cup tea give-HON.2
'Give us two cups of tea'.

(26) *aapni aamaar Ophis-e dEkhaa korun*
you-HON.2.SG I-GEN office-LOC see do-HON.2
'You meet me in my office'.

The claim is that, nucleus utterances (i.e., *du*(*i*) *kaap* in (25) and *aamaar Ophis-e* in (26)) create resonances that are attuned to multiple syntactic structures in the participants' minds (i.e., (25)

[6] It is interesting to note that, in every context projected above in (6-13) against each data, verbal cues may not be an obligatory requirement. Hearers of the target audience can still perform the necessary actions simply by being in the situation. Yet, their performance reflects the practice a society performs. For example, waiting outside of an airport or railway station does not necessarily need the traveller to raise their hands every time a taxi passes by, the taxi driver intuitively knows the requirement of a drive for that traveller, hence the driver performs an action by approaching the traveller prior to any knowledge of the destination. Notice that, the driver necessarily has to belong to that community that practices such actions; approaching travellers waiting for a ride. Does this mean, irrespective of the verbal and non-verbal cues, people are attuned to social practices and word resonances are optional? This could be an interesting question we can leave aside for the moment and focus on the verbal cues, i.e., utterance of a single word or phrase.

and (26)). Similarly, utterances (6), (8), and (10) above are the nucleuses which express (27), (28), and (29) respectively;

(27) *aamaay (ekTu) jol din*
I-ACC (little) water give-HON.2
'Fetch me some water.'

(28) *aapnaar naam ki?*
you-HON-GEN.SG.2 name what
'What is your name?'

(29) *keu Embulens daakun*
someone ambulance call-HON.2
'Someone please call an ambulance'.

Now, the question is, how do native speakers know which syntactic construction must be interpreted in the context given that their utterances are attuned to different levels of syntactic attunements? In other words, how do people know (6) expresses (27) or (8) expresses (28) or (10) expresses (29) and not

(30) *aamaay (ekTu) thaandaa jol din*
I-ACC (little) cold water give-HON.2
'Fetch me some cold water.'

(31) *tomaar naam baanaan kOro*
you-GEN name spelling do-PRES.2
'Spell your name'.

(32) *keu fon kore Embulens daakun*
someone phone do ambulance call-HON.2
'Someone please phone an ambulance'.

respectively?

I assume that LFs (Logical Forms) of the syntactic attunements created by nucleus resonances are saturated if and only if they are in consonance and they are not saturated if dissonances occur. The consonance reflects an entire proposition connecting practices and propositional attitudes to ideology "*…via a notion of attunement shared across a community and the community itself is bounded by the shared practices that define it*." (Beaver and Stanley 2024). The following model can be proposed to better understand how resonance-attunement-consonance works. In a given communicative context, we assume that it is the nucleus that is uttered or an utterance contains the nucleus, then;

The proposed model works well when communicative context is given or the knowledge of the CG is mutually shared between speaker and hearer. But, what about the instances in the following where no such indication of the context is given, at least not directly?

Contexts[7]: John and Mary are taking a break from work. John is getting up and looks at Mary.

(33) a. Coffee (↑) expressing: "Do you want coffee?"

b. Coffee (↓) expressing: "I want coffee."

Dayal's point is that prosody plays a crucial role in (33)[8]. In (33a), the rising intonation signals an interrogation whereas in (33b), the falling intonation signals consonance. In both the cases, the particular utterance of *coffee* is associated to a whole syntactic construction, a sentence. And it is this sentence whose interpretation leads the other person to act accordingly. In (33a), John's utterance gives rise to an interrogative sentence whereas in (33b) Mary's utterance gives rise to a declarative sentence. Therefore, John's action in bringing coffee for Mary reflects that they are attuned to the same *practices* (see Beaver and Stanley (2024) explanation on coffee-game). Similarly, in our examples in (8) and (9) repeated here in (34) and (35) respectively;

(34) *naam* (↑)
name
Expressing: "What is your name" or "Tell us your name."

(35) *baaRi* (↑)
house
Expressing: "Where are you from?" or "Tell us, where your hometown is?"

Prosody associated with the nucleus plays a crucial role in expressing an entire sentential expression. Depending on rising versus falling prosodic features, nucleus utterances are attuned to respective syntactic constructions: it is interrogative when rising (34-35) and a request when falling as shown below;

(36) *jol* (↓)
water
Expressing: "Please, get me some water."

(37) *khaabaar* (↓)
food
Expressing: "Please, give me some food."

(38) *Embulens* (↓)
ambulance
Expressing: "Please, call an ambulance."

In the discussion above, we see that users of a language know what the nucleus is by being actively involved in the communicative context and by identifying the word and/or the phrase the

[7] This particular context and the data shown in (33a) and in (33b) are quoted from one of the slides Veneeta Dayal has presented at a workshop in IIT Delhi on 12.07.2024.

[8] In her slides, it is the examples 3a, b.

prosody goes with. In the former approach, native users identify a nucleus by practice whereas in the latter, it is the prosody that helps an individual to identify the nucleus. In either scenario, nucleus to practice is a process an individual member of a society learns when s/he acquires or learns a language. Beaver and Stanley (2024) argue "*an agent is attuned to a practice to the extent that their state and behavior predictably evolve in accordance with its presence in the agent's context*".

7. Conclusion

The central argument of this paper is to highlight the fact that in different communicative contexts, utterances contain nucleus words and/or phrases. Resonances of these nucleus words and/or phrases are attuned to different syntactic structures. The LFs of these structures are saturated when they are in consonance, and dissonance otherwise. This consonance leads individual members of the community or society to act accordingly. And, their actions reflect their cultural, social, and political practices. We can conclude by saying that, when people use language, consciously or unconsciously, they are attuned to the social, cultural, and political normativity in a way similar to their attunements to the resonances of different nucleus words and/or phrases.

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Exploring the Morphological Complexity in Chokri: Insights into a Tibeto-Burman Language of Nagaland

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the morphological structure of the Chokri language, a lesser-studied member of the Sino-Tibetan language family spoken by a subgroup of the Chakhesang Tribe in Nagaland, India. Chokri, a Tibeto-Burman language, exhibits a rich morphological system characterized by extensive inflectional and derivational processes. Particular attention is given to its complex verbal morphology, the flexibility of adjectives, the typological distinctions in nouns, and the unique features of pronouns, adverbs, postpositions, and interjections. By analyzing the word categories and morphological strategies employed in Chokri, this study highlights the intricate linguistic patterns and typological features that distinguish the language. This comprehensive analysis not only deepens the understanding of Chokri's morphology but also contributes to the broader typological and comparative studies of Tibeto-Burman languages.

1. Introduction

Chokri (ISO 639-3: nri) is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in northeastern India. Recognized as one of the 18 official languages of Nagaland by the State Government, Chokri is included in the school curriculum from classes I to VIII. The term *Chokri* serves both as an ethnolinguistic identifier for the language and its speech community. Specifically, *Chokrimi* refers to the people, while *Chokrijö* denotes the language itself. The majority of Chokri speakers reside in the northwestern part of Phek District, Nagaland, although a significant population also lives in Dimapur, the state's commercial hub, and Kohima, its capital. According to the 2011 Census of India, there are approximately 111,062 Chokri speakers. Chokri is classified as a '*vulnerable*' language by UNESCO (UNESCO, 2010).

Despite its recognition by the state government of Nagaland, India, Chokri remains a lesser-studied language, receiving minimal scholarly attention compared to its genetically related Tibeto-Burman counterparts, such as Angami (Tenyidie), Khezha, and Sumi. Most research to date has primarily concentrated on the phonological and tonal aspects of the language. Early foundational work by Bielenberg and Nienu (2001) on the *Phek Dialect* provided a preliminary account of Chokri's phonetic system, exploring segmental phonemes and tone categories, laying an essential foundation for subsequent studies. More recently, Gogoi, Tetseo, and Gope (2023, 2024)rre investigated the downtrends phenomena in Chokri and explored the intonational

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patterns across different sentence types and tonal downtrends, contributing to a deeper understanding of Chokri's prosodic structure.

Advanced computational techniques have also been applied to explore the complex tonal systems in Chokri, as seen in Gope et al. (2024). Chokri is one of the highly complex tonal languages and hosts five lexical tones (four level tones, viz., extra high, high, mid, and low, and a contour tone, viz., mid-rising). The study by Gope et al. (2024) employed machine learning models to classify the five tones in Chokri tones, achieving significant accuracy and underscoring the potential for computational methods in linguistic analysis. In another innovative study, Gogoi and Gope (2024) used synchronized audio-visual data and machine learning algorithms to analyze tonal nuances in question forms, providing valuable insights into the interaction between tonal systems and different types of question sentences.

While these studies have substantially contributed to phonological and prosodic research, other core linguistic domains, particularly morphology, have received limited attention. Morphological analysis is critical for understanding how Chokri structures words and encodes grammatical relationships. This paper aims to fill this gap by offering a comprehensive description of Chokri morphology. It seeks to provide new insights into the language's structural complexity, thereby offering a new perspective on the linguistic structure of this under-documented language.

2. Morphology

Morphology, the study of word structure, is traditionally divided into two primary areas- inflectional morphology and derivational morphology (Schmid, 2015). Inflectional morphology pertains to grammatical markers such as tense, aspect, case, and number, which modify word forms to fit specific syntactic contexts without altering the core meaning or category of the word. In Chokri, for instance, inflectional morphology can involve the addition of suffixes to verbs to indicate tense or aspect or the marking of nouns to reflect number or case. These modifications result in various word forms derived from the same lexeme, preserving the original meaning while adapting the word for different grammatical constructions.

In contrast, derivational morphology is concerned with the formation of new words, or lexemes, from existing ones through the addition of derivational morphemes. This process not only changes the meaning of the word but may also shift its syntactic category. In Chokri, as in many languages, derivational processes play a crucial role in expanding the lexicon, enabling speakers to generate new words that reflect emerging concepts or distinctions.

Both inflectional and derivational morphemes in Chokri are classified as bound morphemes, meaning they cannot stand alone and must attach to a root or other morphemes. Before examining the specifics of Chokri's inflectional morphology and word formation processes, it is essential first to outline the language's morphological typology. This involves addressing (i) how words are classified and constructed and (ii) the different word categories present in Chokri. These foundational aspects provide the necessary framework for analyzing the intricate ways in which Chokri accommodates inflectional variations and derives new words.

3. Morphological Typology of Chokri

Morphological typology explores how languages construct words by combining smaller units, or morphemes, to convey meaning. Chokri is classified as an agglutinative language. It means that

this language forms words by attaching two or more morphemes in a manner that preserves the distinct boundaries of each unit, allowing for easy segmentation. This characteristic enables each morpheme to contribute its specific meaning within a word (Comrie, 1989). Examples of Chokri's agglutinative structure include:

(1) Avo tātʰɔ̀ tʰɔ̋-vá
Avo pickle pound-PROG
Avo is making pickle.

(2) í n̥̄dɔ̄ n̄-ŋɔ̋
1SG yesterday 2SG-see
'I saw you yesterday.'

(3) hā-kɔ̄ tʰɛ̄və̀-dʒə̆ ʧɔ́ tì-sɔ̋-jɔ̄
1-PL Chicken-egg cook eat-ITER-HAB
'We always eat eggs.'

In these examples, the agglutinative nature of Chokri is demonstrated through the segmentation of distinct morphemes, each contributing specific meanings. For instance, the progressive marker "-vá" in (1) and the iterative-habitual combination "-sɔ̋-jɔ̄" in (3) exemplify how grammatical meanings are layered onto lexical roots without compromising morpheme boundaries. Such morphological transparency is a defining feature of agglutinative languages, as also noted in typological studies (Hammarström et al., 2018).

a. Word Structure

The structure of words in Chokri reflects how morphemes, either free or bound, combine to convey meaning. The free morphemes can stand alone with independent meanings, while the bound morphemes must attach to other morphemes to express meaning. In Chokri, verbal and adjectival roots are typically free morphemes. However, some nominal roots, such as those referring to kinship terms and body parts, function as bound morphemes and require the addition of a personal prefix to form a complete word.

(4) Nominal roots
a) pɾǐ 'strand'
b) ā-pɔ̄ 'my-father'
c) ā-tǎ 'my-mouth'
d) ú-vǎ 'our-stomach'

Nominal roots such as **pɔ̄** (father) and **tǎ** (mouth) require possessive prefixes (**ā-** or **ú-**) to form semantically complete expressions. This indicates a dependency on bound morphology to create meaningful words, aligning with observations in other Tibeto-Burman languages, such as Khezha and Sumi, where nominal roots exhibit similar morphological dependencies (Post & Burling, 2017; Kapfo, 1989; Teo, 2014).

(5) Verbal roots
a) pɾə̄ 'jump'
b) tɔ̋ 'burn'
c) ʧɛ̄ 'wet'
d) ɛ̄ɾ̥ə̆ 'stir'

(6) Adjectival roots

a) nātsí 'young'
b) pɛ̄tʰí 'matured'
c) tʰɾī 'bold'
d) pʰɾɔ̄ 'sour'

As illustrated in examples (5) and (6), verbal and adjectival roots in Chokri function as free morphemes, capable of standing independently as meaningful words. In contrast, example (4) highlights the bound nature of specific nominal roots, particularly those referring to kinship and body parts, which necessitate possessive markers for meaningful expression. This distinction underscores the unique morphological strategies employed by Chokri, emphasizing the asymmetry in its treatment of word classes.

This morphological behavior aligns with broader patterns seen in Tibeto-Burman languages, where morphological typology often intersects with semantic domains, particularly in kinship terms and body part nomenclature (DeLancey, 2015). The classification of roots and their dependency patterns provide further insights into the intricate word-building strategies of Chokri.

4. Word Categories

Word categories, also known as parts of speech, classify words based on their syntactic functions within sentences. A word category refers to a class of words that share similar grammatical properties and perform comparable roles in a sentence. These categories include nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, adpositions, interjections, conjunctions, numerals, and articles. For example, words that represent people, places, or things are categorized as nouns, while words that signify actions or states are classified as verbs. All languages distinguish between lexical categories, whether in spoken, written, or signed forms. Identifying these word categories is a fundamental part of morpho-syntactic analysis and is essential for understanding the structure of any language (Haspelmath, 2001).

Words in all languages can be broadly divided into two main classes: (I) **Content words**, which are open classes that allow for the addition of new words. This class is extensive, with words typically carrying specific and concrete meanings. (II) **Function words** are generally closed classes that do not accommodate new additions. These words serve to convey abstract or general meanings or fulfill grammatical functions (Haspelmath, et al., 2005).

While lexical categories are common across languages, not all languages employ each category equally or distinguish word classes in the same way. For example, *Riau Indonesian*, a monocategorial language spoken in the Riau province, exhibits minimal differentiation between nouns and verbs. The word '*makan*,' for example, demonstrates identical grammatical behavior, denoting both the noun 'food' and a verb or action meaning 'to eat,' depending on its contextual usage (Gil, 2017, 2005). Similarly, in *Cayuga*, an Iroquoian language spoken in Canada, the three primary word categories are nouns, verbs, and particles. Nouns refer to entities, verbs describe actions or states, and particles serve as a catch-all category for other word types, such as adverbs, conjunctions, or prepositions (Mithun, 1999).

In Chokri, the identified word categories include nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, postpositions, interjections, and conjunctions. Of these, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are

categorized as open classes, capable of expanding to include new lexical items. The presence of a robust open-class system reflects Chokri's capacity for lexical innovation and adaptation, consistent with other agglutinative languages (Comrie, 1989).

This classification provides a framework for analyzing Chokri's morpho-syntactic structure and contributes to broader typological studies of Tibeto-Burman languages. By situating Chokri within cross-linguistic discussions of word categories, this study highlights its linguistic diversity while inviting further exploration into its syntactic and semantic patterns.

a. Noun

Chokri nouns form an open word class, allowing the lexicon to expand through borrowing, derivation, and coining. This openness reflects the language's adaptability to accommodate new concepts and external influences, a trait commonly observed in agglutinative languages (Comrie, 1989). For instance:

Borrowed Words: Terms like *"google"*, *"phone"*, *"barti"* (from *"baltin"* meaning bucket), and *"botol"* (from *"bottle"*) are adopted from other languages.

Derived Words: Examples include *"küvö"* (fight), derived from the verbal root *"vö"* (to beat), and *"huküve"* (beauty), derived from the adjectival root *"huve"* (beautiful).

Coined Words: New terms such as *"tayhece"* (school), *"priyoce"* (hospital), and *"salibü"* (WhatsApp) are created. Words like *"tayhece"* and *"priyoce"* are synonymous with existing words *"lesice"* (school) and *"daruce"* (hospital), respectively. However, these new terms are coined to better align with the concepts or cultural nuances these words represent.

Chokri nouns exhibit a robust system of inflection to mark numbers, genders, diminutive forms, and cases. These processes will be further elaborated in Section 5, but they underscore the complexity of Chokri's nominal morphology, consistent with patterns in Tibeto-Burman languages (DeLancey, 2015).

b. Pronoun

Pronouns in Chokri form a closed word class, exhibiting distinct grammatical features. Notably, Chokri's pronouns are gender-neutral, lacking the distinction between "he" and "she." The third-person pronouns ū or pū are used for all genders, which aligns with the typological tendencies of many Tibeto-Burman languages to prioritize animacy and social hierarchy over gender distinctions (Mithun, 1999). Additionally, Chokri distinguishes between singular /í/, dual /nɛ̄-ní/, and plural /nɛ̄-kɔ̄/ forms. As with many Tibeto-Burman languages, Chokri differentiates between inclusive and exclusive forms for first-person and second-person dual and plural pronouns. The inclusive forms are /ámì/ or /āwú/ (two of us), /nɛ̄-ní/ (two of you), /ú-kɔ̄/ (we), and /nɛ̄-kɔ̄/ (you all), while the exclusive forms are /hā-ní/ (two of us), /ū-ní/ (two of them), and /ū-kɔ̄/ (them).

Pronoun	Singular	Dual	Plural
First-person	Í	ámì / āwú (inclusive) hā-ní (exclusive)	ú-kɔ̄ (inclusive) hā-kɔ̄ (exclusive)
Second person	nɔ̄	nɛ̄-ní	nɛ̄-kɔ̄
Third person	ū / pū	ū-ní / pū-ní	ū-kɔ̄

Table 1: *Pronouns in Chokri*

Chokri demonstrative pronouns introduce spatial distinctions by marking whether an object is within or outside the speaker's peripheral vision. This feature provides spatial precision, which is rare in many languages but observed in some Tibeto-Burman and other East Asian languages (Lander, and Haegeman, 2007). Furthermore, demonstrative pronouns near the speaker convey proximity, while those beyond vision indicate distance.

(7) hīhī 'this'
í tsālɛ̄ hīhī zɔ̄-lɛ̄
1SG song this compose-DECL
'I composed this song.'

(8) tsə̀tsə̀ 'that' (within vision)
tsə̀tsə̀ kʰàɾí-tɛ̄
that give-IMP
'Give me that.'

(9) lű́hī 'that' (within vision)
āzā lű́hī-lɛ̄
mine that-DECL
'That is mine.'

(10) sə̄sə̄ 'that' (outside the vision)
í sə̄sə̄ pɔ́ɔ́-lɛ̄
1SG that tell.PROG-DECL
'I am talking about that.' (I am telling that)

The distinction between demonstrative pronouns referring to objects within or outside the speaker's peripheral vision, as well as their proximity, is visually represented in the diagram below (Figure 1). This typological feature highlights the interplay between perception, grammar, and space in Chokri, aligning with broader studies on spatial deixis in Tibeto-Burman and other agglutinative languages (Post, 2019).
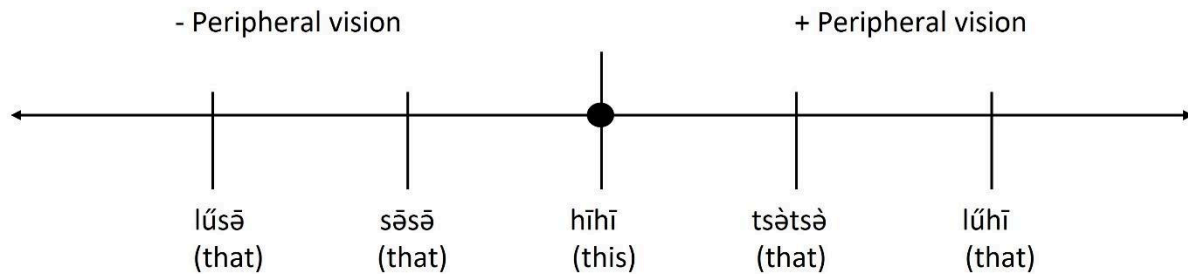
***Figure 1**: Visual representation of proximity and whether an object is within or outside the speaker's peripheral vision.*

Additionally, Chokri demonstrative pronouns inflect to indicate duality and plurality, signaling number distinctions. They can also incorporate case markers, such as locative and temporal markers, to form adverbial expressions. For example:

(11) hīhī > hī-ní-hī (these two)

(12) hīhī > hī-kō-hī (these)
(13) tsə̀tsə̀ > tsə̀-ní-tsə̀ (those two)
(14) tsə̀tsə̀ > tsə̀-kō-tsə̀ (those two)
(15) lű̋hī > lű̋-ní-hì (those two)
(16) lű̋hī > lű̋-kō-hī (those)
(17) sə̄sə̄ > sə̄-ní-sə̄ (those two)
(18) sə̄sə̄ > sə̄-kō-sə̄ (those)

Pronouns inflected with locative case marker:
(19) hīhī > hī-lō-hī (here)
(20) tsə̀tsə̀ > tsə̀-lō-tsə̀ (there)
(21) lű̋hī > lű̋-lō-hì (there)
(22) sə̄sə̄ > sə̄-lō-sə̄ (there)

Pronouns inflected with temporal case marker:
(23) hīhī > hī-tʃɛ́-hī (here)
(24) tsə̀tsə̀ > tsə̀-tʃɛ́-tsə̀ (there)
(25) lű̋hī > lű̋-tʃɛ́-hī (there)
(26) sə̄sə̄ > sə̄-tʃɛ́-sə̄ (there).

c. Verb

Verbs in Chokri constitute the most morphologically complex word class, characterized by the extensive range of affixes that can be attached to a verbal root. These affixes encode various grammatical meanings, such as tense, aspect, and mood. For example, verbs are marked to indicate the time of the action and the subject's attitude toward it (further discussed in Section 5). Chokri verbs belong to an open class of words, and the language exhibits the use of derivational prefixes and suffixes to create new words from existing verb forms.

One key derivational process involves causative markers, which, when added to a verb, indicate that the subject causes someone else to act, for example, *tì* (eat) → *me-ti* (cause to eat, i.e., feed). Another important derivation involves the nominalizer suffix, which converts verbs into nouns, allowing action words to refer to persons or things, for example, *rho* (to respect) → *the-rho (respect)* etc. Unlike many Tibeto-Burman languages, Chokri verbs do not exhibit agreement with number, person, or gender, nor do they mark pronominal agreement with their arguments. This lack of agreement aligns with some other languages in the family that prioritize analytic over synthetic encoding of argument structure (Mithun, 1999).

The verb system in Chokri plays a crucial role in sentence structure, as verbs are central to conveying temporal and modal information. These meanings are often clarified through context and inflection. Moreover, reduplication in verbs (*ti-ti* (eat-eat) → 'to keep eating/eat repeatedly') can serve to intensify meaning or indicate repetitive action. Overall, Chokri verbs demonstrate the complexity and flexibility of the language, enabling speakers to express a wide range of actions and states with precision.

d. Adjective

Chokri has a relatively smaller class of adjectives compared to nouns and verbs. Like other Tibeto-Burman languages (Post and Burling, 2017), Chokri adjectives typically follow the noun

they modify. This word order is a common feature in many Tibeto-Burman languages. For example, instead of saying 'black shirt' /ɛ̄tə̀ bɔ̄lā/, the native speakers of Chokri will say 'shirt black' /bɔ̄lā ɛ̄tə̀/.

A notable feature of Chokri adjectives is that they can sometimes function as verbs without the need for an additional verb. In such cases, adjectives describe a state or condition rather than simply modifying a noun. This verb-like behavior allows adjectives to take tense, aspect, and mood (TAM) markers, much like verbs do. Below are some examples:

(27) ātɔ̀ pə̋-jì-tɛ́
PN fat-RES-PRF
'Ato became fat.'

(28) tʰǎ lə̄-rī-tɛ́
today hot-INTS-PRF
'It is very hot today.'

Chokri adjectives can also be reduplicated to express intensity or emphasis, as seen in the following examples

(29) n̩̄-fə̀mə̄nɛ̋-kɔ̄ hűvɛ̋-vɛ̋-zə̋
2SG.POSS-cloth-PL beautiful-RED-INT
'Your clothes are very beautiful.'

(30) nɔ́ mɛ̄tsə̀-tsə̀-hì-tɛ̄
2SG lazy-RED-PROH-IMP
'Don't be very lazy.'

Adjectives in Chokri belong to an open class of words and can be derived through the process of compounding. This means adjectives can be formed by combining a noun or verb with another element to express a specific quality. Some examples of adjective formation through compounding include:

(31) hű + vɛ̋ = hűvɛ̋
appearance good = beautiful

(32) tì + vɛ̋ = tìvɛ̋
eat good = tasty

(33) m̥ʰā + dì = m̥ʰādì
things NEG.EX poor

(34) m̥ʰā + nɛ́ = m̥ʰānɛ́
things have rich

These derivational processes expand the lexicon while maintaining the morphological consistency of Chokri, showcasing its ability to articulate nuanced descriptions. The verb-like characteristics of Chokri adjectives further align them with other Tibeto-Burman languages that blur the lines between word categories (DeLancey, 2015).

e. Adverb

Adverbs in Chokri form an open class of words. Specifically, manner adverbs are derived through the process of reduplication, either partial or full. For example, the adjective /mɛ̄tsɔ̄/, meaning 'quick' or 'fast,' can change to the adverb /mɛ̄tsɔ̄-tsɔ̄/, meaning 'quickly' by reduplicating part of the word. This process is commonly observed in Tibeto-Burman languages, where reduplication emphasizes or modifies meaning (Post and Burling, 2017). Chokri adverbs can appear either before or after the verb they modify, as demonstrated in the examples (35 and 36) below:

(35) lɔ̄ɔ́-hɔ̄, ɛ̄lɛ̆ -lɛ̆ trắà -tɛ̄
hot.PROG-EMPH slow-ADV drink-IMP
'It is hot, drink slowly.'

(36) ú-kɔ̄ mɛ̄ɲú-tɔ̆-tɛ́, tà mɛ̄tsɔ̄-tsɔ̄-tɛ̄
1-PL late-FUT-PRF walk fast-ADV-IMP
'We are going to be late, walk quickly.'

Types of adverbs in Chokri:

(37) Manner Adverbs: These describe how an action is performed. Some examples include:
a) /ɛ̄lɛ̆-lɛ̆/ 'slowly'
b) /mɛ̄tsɔ̄-tsɔ̄/ 'quickly'
c) /kɘ̄tʰɔ̆-tʰɔ̆/ 'honestly'

(38) **Temporal Adverbs**: These indicate the time when an action occurs. Examples include:
a) /n̩̄zí̋/ 'last night'
b) /tsắlì/ 'this morning'
c) /n̩̄zìsá/ 'last year'

(39) **Place Adverbs**: These specify the location of an action. Examples are:
a) /hīʧɛ́/ 'here'
b) /tsɘ̀ʧɛ́/ 'there'
c) /kɘ̄mɘ̄nɔ̆ʧɛ́/ 'nearby'

(40) **Frequency Adverbs**: These describe how often an action occurs. Examples include:
a) /hùʧɛ́/ 'sometimes'
b) /ūtɘ́mɘ̄tɘ́/ 'always' / 'all the time'
c) /tɘ̄tsɛ̋ kɘ̄pɾà/ 'yearly/ annually'

f. Postposition

In Chokri, postpositions serve as grammatical markers that follow the noun or pronoun they govern, indicating various syntactic and semantic relationships such as location, direction, and more. Unlike prepositions in languages like English, which appear before the noun, postpositions in Chokri follow the noun. This positioning aligns with the common syntactic pattern of many Tibeto-Burman languages (Comrie, 1989), which generally exhibit an SOV (Subject-Object-Verb) word order.

Postpositions in Chokri are bound morphemes, meaning they must attach to other elements, typically the noun or its possessive prefix, to form a complete expression. For example, in the phrase *'ū-tʰrɔ̄-lū'* (under it), the morpheme *'ū-'* is the third-person possessive prefix, and *'tʰrɔ̄'* is the postposition. Furthermore, postpositions can be inflected with locative markers such as *'-lū'* to express specific spatial relationships. In this case, *'-lū'* functions as a locative marker, indicating that the position being referred to is 'below.' Thus, the entire phrase *'ū-tʰrɔ̄-lū'* translates to 'under him/her/it,' where *'ū-'* indicates possession, *'tʰrɔ̄'* denotes the relative position, and *'-lū'* specifies the location.

Below is a list of common postpositions in Chokri:

(41) Inside /ū-lū/
(42) Below/under /ū-tʰrɔ̄/
(43) Above /ū-pī/
(44) Beside /ū-ʧə̆/
(45) Behind /ū-sá/
(46) Infront /ū-dʒə̄/
(47) between /ū-dɔ̀/

g. Interjection

Chokri, like all other languages, uses words that express spontaneous emotions, reactions, or exclamations. They are often used independently of regular sentence structure and can convey a wide range of feelings, such as surprise, pain, anger, joy, or hesitation. Some of the interjections in the language include:

(48) /àwű/ 'express envy'
àwű! í-rí n̥-bī-n̥ sā-lɛ̄
awu! 1SG-also 2SG-like-DES want-DECL
'Awu! I also want to be like you.'

(49) /ắkʰə̋/ 'express regret'
ắkʰə̋! í-rí tʰrí̋-zɛ̀ɛ̄ vɛ̋-tɔ̀-zə̋
akhü! 1SG-also buy-COND good-FUT-HYP
'Akhü! It would have been good if I bought as well.'

(50) /ʧə̋/ 'express disgust'
ʧə̋! pʰī mɛ̄rɔ́-lɛ̄
chö! See disgust-DECL
'Chö! Disgusting.'

(51) /ālā/ 'express pain'
ālā! mì və̋-hì tɛ̄
ala! people beat-NEG IMP
'Ala! Don't beat others.'

(52) /hīhɛ̀ī/ 'calling attention'

hīhɛ̀ī! vāpə̀ hī-ʧɛ́-hī pʰɛ̆rī́-nɔ̀
hihey! once DEM-TEMP-DEM come-IMP
'Hihey! Come here once.'

(53) /ījɛ̄/ 'express agreement'
ījɛ̄ ā-pɔ̄-nɔ̄ sə̄-bīí pɔ́-vá
yes, 1POSS-father-FOC DEM-like tell-PROG
'Yes, my father is saying like tha.t'

(54) /hm̋/ 'express disbelief'
hm̋! í sə̄sə̄ mə̄lə̄-ʧɛ̀-mɔ̀
Hmmm! 1SG DEM believe-INTS-NEG
'Hmmmmh! I don't believe that at all.'

(55) /ɲàā/ 'greetings'
ɲàā! sə̄ɾ̥ɔ̌ mɛ̄ mà?
Nya! healthy or not?
Nya! Are you well? / How are you?

(56) /wɛ̄hɔ̀ɔ̄/ 'express sympathy'
wɛ̄hɔ̀ɔ̄! dī́pə̀bí sə̄-bītá
Weho! How DEM-like
Weho! How did it happen like that?

(57) /āʃə̀/ 'express disappointment/regret'
āʃə̀ sə̄-bī-mɔ̀-zɛ̀ɛ̄ vɛ̋-tɔ̀-zə̋
Assh! DEM-like-NEG-COND good-FUT-HYP
'Assh! It would have been good if it was not like that.'

h. Conjunction

Conjunctions are words that connect clauses, sentences, or words within the same clause. They are essential for constructing complex sentences and showing relationships between ideas and thoughts. In Chokri, some commonly used conjunctions include:

(58) /mɔ́/ and /lɛ̄/

/mɔ́/ and /lɛ̄/ are synonymous and equivalent to the English word 'and.' They connect similar ideas or items. Examples:

a. í tɛ̄fə̄-sɛ̋ lɛ̄ ʧə̄pʰɔ̀-sɛ̋-ní tì ā-ɲə́
1SG banana-fruit and apple-fruit-DU eat 1SG-like
'I like eating bananas and apples.'

b. í tɛ̄fə̄-sɛ̋ mɔ́ ʧə̄pʰɔ̀-sɛ̋-ní tì ā-ɲə́
1SG banana-fruit and apple-fruit-DU eat 1SG-like
'I like eating bananas and apples.'

(59) /vɛ̄lɛ̄/

/vɛ̄lɛ̄/ shows contrast or exception and is equivalent to the English term 'but'. Examples:

a. í ā-m̥ʰɔ́ mɑ̋ vɛ̄lɛ̄ ā-sá-lű-mɔ̀-tɛ́
1SG 1SG-dream dreamt but 1SG-back-think-NEG-PRF
'I dreamt, but I don't remember.'

b. í tʰɛ̄rí vɛ̄lɛ̄ dʒə́ trɑ̋-mɔ̀-tɛ́
1SG thirsty but water drink-NEG-PRF
'I was thirsty, but I did not drink water.'

(60) /mɛ̄/

/mɛ̄/ presents alternatives or choices and is equivalent to the English conjunction 'or.' Examples:

a. nɔ́ tɛ̄fɔ̄-sɛ̋ n̥̄-ɲɔ́-və̄ mɛ̄ ʧə̄pʰɔ̀-sɛ̋
2SG banana-fruit 2SG-like-COMP or apple-fruit
'Do you like bananas or apples more?'

b. nɔ́ hīhī mɛ̄ hī-jɔ̄-hī pɔ̄-tɔ̀
2SG this or this-DEF-this take-FUT
'Will you take this or this?'

(61) /mɔ̀zɛ̀sə̄/
/mɔ̀zɛ̀sə̄/ functions in a conditional relationship and is equivalent to English 'if not.' It is often used in conditional sentences to introduce a negative condition. Examples:

a. ʧɑ̆ mɔ̀zɛ̀sə̄ dʒə́ trɑ̋-tɔ̀ mɛ̄?
tea if not water drink-FUT QP
'If not tea, will you drink water?'

b. í hīhī mɔ̀zɛ̀sə̄ ɛ̄trɛ̌ pə̀-hɔ̀
1SG this if not other take-NEG
'If not this, I will not take other.'

Mood-Linked Conjunctions

Some conjunctions in Chokri can be closely linked with mood. For instance, when expressing conditions, conjunctions like "if" or "unless" might be inflected on the verb of the subordinate clause to show conditionality. Similarly, conjunctions like "although" or "even if" might co-occur with verbs inflected for a concessive mood, reflecting a contrast between expectation and reality. Examples include:

(62) lɛ̄sɨ̋ pʰrì-zɛ̀ɛ̄ pāssə̀-jɔ̄
book read-COND pass-GNO
'(You) pass if you study.'

(63) hīhī tì-mɔ̀-zɛ̀ɛ̄ mà-hɔ̀
DEM eat-NEG-COND grow-NEG
'(You) will not grow, if (you) don't eat this.'

(64) dʒə́ tɾa̋á-rí thɛ̄rí lǎ-mɔ̀-tɛ́
water drink.PROG-CONC thirsty end-NEG-PRF
'Although (I am) drinking water, it is not quenching my thirst.'

(65) lɛ̄sí̋ pʰɾīí-rí sɛ̋ɛ̀-mɔ̀-tɛ́
book read.PROG-CONC know.RES-NEG-PRF
'Although (I am) studying, I have not learned.

5. Inflectional Morphology

Inflectional morphology examines how words change their forms to express grammatical features such as tense, number, case, gender, and mood. This aligns with the linguistic typology of Chokri, which is characterized by its rich inflectional system that efficiently marks grammatical distinctions through morphological changes while maintaining flexibility in natural discourse. Unlike derivational morphology, which creates new words, inflectional processes modify a word's form to align with its syntactic role while preserving its core meaning. This aligns with Chokri's linguistic typology, which emphasizes morphosyntactic alignment through inflectional changes.

Chokri is a highly inflectional language, employing an extensive range of inflectional morphemes to mark various grammatical distinctions. For example, verbs in Chokri exhibit forms like "ā-zə̋mì-ní" (my friend-dual) or "hī-ní-hī" (this-dual-this), showcasing the language's ability to convey nuanced grammatical relationships through morphological inflection. For instance, verbs in Chokri exhibit rich inflection to indicate aspects, cases, moods, and other grammatical features, making the language a compelling subject for morphological study within the Tibeto-Burman family (Arcodia, and Basciano, 2020).

a. Numbers

Chokri employs grammatical number distinctions to differentiate between singular, dual, and plural forms. The dual form is used exclusively for two entities, while the plural represents three or more. The examples of number marking in Chokri are shown below:

(66)	**Gloss**	**Singular**	**Dual**	**Plural**
	Book	lɛ̄sí̋dà	lɛ̄sí̋dà-ní	lɛ̄sí̋dà-kɔ̄
	Tiger	tɛ̄kʰɔ̋	tɛ̄kʰɔ̋-ní	tɛ̄kʰɔ̋-kɔ̄
	My friend	ā-zə̋mì	ā-zə̋mì-ní	ā-zə̋mì-kɔ̄

In most cases, Chokri inflectional markers are suffixes occurring after the root or stem. This pattern aligns with many other Tibeto-Burman languages, where suffixation is the predominant strategy for inflection. However, while Chokri occasionally employs infixation for demonstrative pronouns, such infixation is rare among its linguistic relatives, highlighting an intriguing area for further comparative study (Benedict, 1972; Van Driem, 2001). However, dual and plural markers function as infixes when applied to demonstrative pronouns, marking an exception to the general pattern. Examples of number marking in demonstrative pronouns in Chokri are illustrated below:

(67)	**Gloss**	**Singular**	**Dual**	**Plural**
	This	hīhī	hī-ní-hī	hī-kə̄-hī
	That	lű̋hī	lű̋-ní-hī	lű̋-kə̄-hī
	That	sə̄sə̄	sə̄-ní-sə̄	sə̄-kə̄-sə̄

Similar to Angami and Mao, two genetically related languages, Chokri grammatical number markers are not obligatory. This non-obligatory nature of markers is significant both linguistically and culturally. Linguistically, it demonstrates the efficiency of contextual cues, such as numerals and quantifiers, in conveying number distinctions, which aligns with a broader tendency in Tibeto-Burman languages to economize morphological marking. Culturally, it reflects the language's adaptability in diverse communicative contexts, allowing speakers to prioritize clarity and brevity based on situational demands (Benedict, 1972; Van Driem, 2001). This non-obligatory nature reflects a broader pattern in Tibeto-Burman languages, where number marking often depends on contextual elements rather than morphological compulsion (Benedict, 1972).

(68) í lɛ̄sı̋dà pə̀ pʰɾī
1SG book one read
'I read one book.'

(69) í lɛ̄sı̋dà ɛ̄nā pʰɾī
1SG book two read
'I read two book.' (I read two books).

(70) í lɛ̄sı̋dà ɛ̄tɾə̌ pʰɾī
1SG book many read
'I read many book.' (I read many books).

In contexts involving numerals and quantifiers, nouns can remain morphologically unmarked for numbers. In such instances, the number distinction is understood from the numeral or quantifier, rendering explicit inflection unnecessary. This phenomenon, typical of several Tibeto-Burman languages, highlights the functional flexibility of Chokri morphology in natural discourse (Van Driem, 2001).

b. Gradation

In Chokri, adjectives exhibit three degrees of comparison, viz. positive, comparative, and superlative. The positive degree represents the base form and is not marked morphologically. In contrast, the comparative and superlative degrees are morphologically marked using the suffixes **/-və̄/** and **/tʰə̌/**, respectively.

(71)	Postitive	Comparative	Superlative
	mɛ̄sá (clean)	mɛ̄sá-və̄ (cleaner)	mɛ̄sá-tʰɔ̌ (cleanest)
	dʒə́ (short)	dʒə́-və̄ (shorter)	dʒə́-tʰɔ̌ (shortest)
	hɔ̋vɛ̋ (beautiful)	hɔ̋vɛ̋-və̄ (more beautiful)	hɔ̋vɛ̋-tʰɔ̌ (most beautiful)
	vɛ̋ (good)	vɛ̋-və̄ (better)	vɛ̋-tʰɔ̌ (best)
	tsə́ (small)	tsə́-və̄ (smaller)	tsə́-tʰɔ̌ (smallest)
	pʰɹɔ̄ (sour)	pʰɹɔ̄-və̄ (sourer)	pʰɹɔ̄-tʰɔ̌ (sourest)

c. Diminutive

The diminutive in Chokri is marked using the suffix */-nɛ̆/*, which can be applied to both animate and inanimate nouns. This suffix conveys a sense of smaller size or younger age but may also reflect affection or endearment, depending on the context.

(72)	Chokri	Gloss	Diminutive -nɛ̆	Gloss
	nǎlɔ̄	Cat	nǎlɔ̄-nɛ̆	Kitten
	tʰɛ̄pùmì	Man	tʰɛ̄pùmì-nɛ̆	(little) Boy
	tɛ̄hɛ̋	Cup	tɛ̄hɛ̋-nɛ̆	small cup
	ʧɛ́	house	ʧɛ́-nɛ̆	small house
	tʰɛ̄və̀	hen	tʰɛ̄və̀-nɛ̆	Chick

d. Gender

Gender in Chokri can be divided into the ***human*** and ***nonhuman*** categories. The common gender is morphologically unmarked for both human and nonhuman categories. In the **human** category, the base form typically represents the common gender, but explicit marking is used to indicate masculine or feminine genders when necessary.

In personal names, the masculine gender is generally unmarked, while the feminine gender is marked using the suffix /-lɘ/ (lü), as seen in examples such as Ata**lü**, Nüto**lü**, Rüku**lü**, Ve**lü,** etc. For nouns outside personal names, the masculine gender is marked with the suffix /-ɔ̄/, and the feminine gender with the suffix /-ʙ̥ə́/. The masculine marker /-ɔ̄/ also functions as a **portmanteau morpheme,** doubling as a **definitive marker**.

(73)	Stem	Gloss	masculine	feminine
	kɔ̄mɔ̄tʰǻmì	Teacher	kɔ̄mɔ̄tʰǻ-ɔ̄	kɔ̄mɔ̄tʰǻ-ʙ̥ə́
	ʧɛ̄tǻmì	Servant	ʧɛ̄tǻ-ɔ̄	ʧɛ̄tǻ-ʙ̥ə́
	ʒɔ̄sǎmì	Bridegroom	ʒɔ̄sǎ-ɔ̄	ʒɔ̄sǎ-ʙ̥ə́

In the **nonhuman** category, gender distinctions are more nuanced and divided into **quadrupeds** and **feathered bipeds**. These distinctions are largely lexical. Generic markers also exist to denote masculinity and femininity in nonhuman entities. Consider the following examples:

(74) /ū-pù/ 'generic term used to refer to males in quadrupeds.'

(75) /ū-nɔ̄ / 'generic term used to refer to females in quadrupeds.'
(76) /və̄-dʒə̌/ 'generic term used to refer to males in feathered bipeds.'
(77) /və̄-lǐ/ 'generic term used to refer to females in feathered bipeds.'

The suffixes/- pù/ and /- dʒə̌/ in /ū-pù/ and /və̄-dʒə̌/ denote masculinity in quadrupeds and feathered bipeds, respectively. Similarly, the suffix /-nɔ̄/ and /-lǐ/ in /ū-nɔ̄ / and /və̄-lǐ/ marks the feminine gender in quadrupeds and feathered bipeds respectively. Furthermore, the feminine gender in nonhuman categories can further be divided based on age and reproductive status. This distinction adds a layer of specificity to the Chokri gender system. The examples are shown below:

Word	Generic Feminine	Younger females	Older females who have borne offspring
tʰɛ̄və̀ 'Chicken'	və̄-lǐ	və̄-lǐ	və̄-tɾə́
tʰɛ̄ɾə̋və̀ 'Pheasant'	və̄-lǐ	və̄-lǐ	və̄-tɾə́
tɛ̄ʃə́ 'Dog'	ū-nɔ̄	ʃə̄-nɛ̋	ʃə̄-tɾə́
tʰɛ̄vɔ̀ 'Pig'	ū-nɔ̄	vɔ̄-nɛ̋	vɔ̄-tɾə́

(78)

e. Negation

In Chokri, negation is expressed using multiple markers, each serving specific grammatical functions:

(79) The suffix /-mɔ̀/ is used to negate verbs, adjectives, and nouns/pronouns.

a. í tì-mɔ̀-lɛ̄
1SG eat-NEG-DECL
'I did not eat.'

b. hīhī hű̋vɛ̋-mɔ̀-lɛ̄
DEM beautiful-NEG-DECL
'This is not beautiful'

c. hīhī-mɔ̀ hīhī-lɛ̄
DEM-NEG DEM-DECL
'Not this, this!'

(80) The /-hì/ is a negative imperative marker used to negate commands or suggestions.

a. hīhī tì-hì-tɛ̄
DEM eat-NEG-IMP
'Don't eat this.'

b. tsə̀-ʧɛ́ pʰɛ̌-hì-tɛ̄
DEM-TEMP go-NEG-IMP
'Don't go there.'

(81) The suffix /-hɔ̀/ is a Negative Future marker used to indicate future negation.

a. í lɔ̄vā tì-hɔ̀
1SG food eat-NEG
'I will not eat food.'

b. í sɔ̄dɔ̄ lɛ̄síʧɛ́-lɔ̄ vɔ́-hɔ̀-tɛ́
1SG tomorrow school-LOC go-NEG-PRF
'I will not go to school tomorrow.'

f. The suffix /-mù/ is a Modal negation. It suggests that the subject is unwilling or unlikely to do something.

a. ātɔ̀ vɔ́rí-mù-lɛ̄
PN come-NEG-DECL
'Ato wouldn't come/refused to come.'

b. ā-ʃə́ lɔ̄vā tì-mù-tɛ́-lɛ̄
1POSS-dog food eat-NEG-PRF-DECL
'My dog wouldn't eat/refused to eat.'

g. Existential

a. ā-zā tɛ̄ʃə́ pə̀ bá
1SG-POSS dog one EXST
'I have a dog.'

b. ātɔ̀ kɔ̄hūʧɛ́-lɔ̄ bá-mɔ̀-lɛ̄
PN church-LOC EXST-NEG-DECL
'Ato is not in the church.'

h. Tense

Chokri maintains a future versus non-future distinction, i.e., tense distinctions are primarily made between future and non-future actions. The future tense is marked explicitly with the suffix /-tɔ̀/. The no-future tense, however, does not have a specific suffix; instead, the base form of the verb is used in a non-future construction. Non-future actions can be further clarified through the use of aspects and temporal adverbs, which help specify whether the action took place in the past or is happening in the present. This reliance on aspectual markers and temporal adverbs to indicate past or present aligns with patterns observed in other Tibeto-Burman languages (Comrie, 1985).

(82) í lɔ̄vā tì-tɔ̀
1SG food eat-FUT
'I will eat food.'

(83) í sɔ̄dɔ̄ dʒə́və̄-tɔ̀
1SG tomorrow swim-FUT
'I will swim tomorrow.'

(84) í lə̄vā tì-tɔ̌-tɛ́
1SG food eat-FUT-PRSP
'I am about to eat food.'

(85) í dʒə́və̋-tɔ̌-zə́-lɛ
1SG swim-FUT-PRSP-DECL
'I am about to swim.'

(86) í lə̄vā tì
1SG food eat
'I eat food/I ate food.'

(87) í ṇ̄dɔ̄ dʒə́və̋
1SG yesterday swim
'I swam yesterday.'

Chokri's system highlights the role of temporal adverbs, such as "yesterday" (*ṇ̄dɔ̄*) and "last night" *(ṇzi̋),* in non-future contexts. This reliance on adverbs for disambiguating time is consistent with cross-linguistic trends in Tibeto-Burman languages, where aspect and temporal markers often take precedence over tense morphology (Comrie, 1985).

i. Aspects

In Chokri, aspects are marked either morphologically or phonologically, with a significant portion being marked morphologically by specific morphemes. These aspects convey nuanced information about the temporal flow, frequency, or completeness of an action. Morphological marking of aspects is common in languages with rich verbal systems, as noted in studies of Tibeto-Burman languages (Comrie, 1985). The morphologically marked aspects in Chokri include the progressive, habitual, continuative, perfective, inceptive, iterative, perfect, prospective, resultative, and gnomic aspects.

(88) Progressive aspect /-vá/

a. í lə̄vā tì-vá
1SG food eat-PROG
'I am eating food.'

b. í dʒə́və̋-vá
1SG swim-PROG
'I am swimming.'

(89) Continuative aspect /-lù/

a. í lə̄vā tìí -lù
1SG food eat.PROG-CONT
'I am still eating food.'

b. í dʒə́və̋ə́-lù
1SG swim.PROG-CONT
'I am still.'

(90) Inceptive aspect /-bɔ̄/

a. í lɔ̄vā tì-bɔ́-jì-tɛ́
1SG food eat-INCH-RES-PRF
'I have started eating.'

b. í dʒə́və̋-bɔ́-jì-tɛ́
1SG swim-INCH-RES-PRF
'I have started eating.'

The inceptive aspect, marked by **/-bɔ̄/**, reflects the beginning of an action and often co-occurs with resultative or perfective markers to indicate completion or relevance to the present.

(91) Iterative aspect /-zɔ̄/ & /-sə̋/

a. í lɔ̄vā tì-zɔ̄-vá
1SG food eat-ITER-PROG
'I kept eating.'

b. í dʒə́və̋-sə̋-vá-jɔ̄
1SG swim-ITER-PROG-HAB
'I always swimming.'

(92) Perfective aspect /-vɛ̋/

a. í lɔ̄vā tì-vɛ̋
1SG food eat-PFV
'I have eaten food.'

b. í dʒə́və̋-vɛ́
1SG swim-PFV
'I have swum.'

(93) Perfect aspect /-tɛ́/[2]

a. í lɔ̄vā tìì-tɛ́
1SG food eat.RES-PFV
'I have eaten food.'

b. í dʒə́və̋ə̀-tɛ́
1SG swim.RES-PFV
'I had swum.'

(94) Prospective aspect /-zə́/ & /-tɛ́/

a. í lɔ̄vā tìí-tɔ̌-zə́-lɛ̄
1SG food eat-IMM.FUT-PRSP.-DECL

[2] The suffix /-tɛ́/ is a homophonous morpheme, meaning it has the same pronunciation and tone but different meanings depending on the context. The morpheme /-tɛ́/ marks the perfect and prospective aspect. The perfect aspect is often or always occurring in a non-finite construction while the prospective aspect occurs in a finite construction. In this case, when a verb is inflected with the Future tense.

‘I am about to eat food.’

b. í lɔ̄vā tìí-tɔ̌-tɛ́
1SG food eat-IMM.FUT-PRSP
‘I am about to eat food.’

While both **/-zə́/** and **/-tɛ́/** express an action or event that is expected or intended to happen, **/-tɛ́/** conveys a stronger sense of immediacy. This distinction is consistent with the grammaticalization of proximity markers in Tibeto-Burman languages (DeLancey, 2015). Consider the following examples:

c. í ɹə̀vɔ́ɔ́-tɔ̌-tɛ́
1SG travel-IMM.FUT-PRSP
‘I am about to travel.’

d. í kə̄ɲű-ɔ̄ tʰrī ɹə̀vɔ́ɔ́-tɔ̌-zə́-lɛ̄
1SG later-DEF month travel-IMM.FUT-PRSP-DECL
‘I am going to travel next month.’

(95) Habitual aspect /-jɔ̄/[3]

a. í lɔ̄vā tì-jɔ̄
1SG food eat-HAB
‘I eat food.’

b. í dʒə́vɔ̋-jɔ̄
1SG swim-HAB
‘I swim.’

(96) Gnomic aspect /-jɔ̄/

a. tʰə̄mà kə̄vɛ̋-kɔ̄ tə́-lə̄ vɔ́-jɔ̄
people NOM-good-PL heaven-LOC go-GNO
‘Good people go to heaven.’

b. gá tì-zɔ̋ ú-lá vɛ̋-jɔ̄
leafy veg. eat-HYP 1PL-for good-GNO
‘Eating vegetables is good for us.’

(97) Resultative aspect /-jì/ or /kə̄jì/

a. í pāssə̀-kə̄jì lá ā-pɔ̄ hīhī tʰɾí̋ khàɾí̋
1SG pass-RES because 1SG-father DEM buy give
‘My father bought me this because I passed my exam.’

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[3] The suffix /-jɔ̄/ in Chokri is homophonous morpheme. It can be used to indicate both the habitual aspect and the gnomic aspect. When /-jɔ̄/ is employed to mark the habitual aspect, it conveys an action that occurs regularly or habitually, as in “He goes to the market every day”. In contrast, when /-jɔ̄/ marks the gnomic aspect, it expresses general truths or universal statements, such as “The sun rises in the east”. Despite the different functions, the suffix remains phonetically identical, with the context determining its specific meaning.

b. ʧɛ́ hīhī tʰí̋ tsɔ̄ɔ̀-kə̄jì lə̄ tə́ɾə̄-bə̄ tɛ́
house DEM do complete-RES on rain-INCH-PRF
'Upon the completion of this house, it started to rain.'

j. Mood

In Chokri, mood is expressed through specific morphemes that encode the speaker's attitude toward the action or event. The language distinguishes between several moods, including imperative, conditional, hypothetical, declarative, dubitative, potential, concessive, and desiderative. These distinctions align with cross-linguistic patterns observed in Tibeto-Burman languages, where modal marking plays a key role in conveying nuance (Palmer, 2001).

(98) Imperative /-tɛ̄/

a. ʧɛ̄kʰá̋ kʰá̋-tɛ̄
door close-IMP
'Close the door.'

b. tsə̀-ʧɛ́ pʰɛ̆-hì-tɛ̄
that-TEMP go-NEG-IMP
'Do not go there.'

The imperative mood **/-tɛ̄/** is used for issuing commands or prohibitions, as seen in (98b), where it co-occurs with the negative marker **/-hì/.**

(99) Conditional mood /-zɛ̀/

a. nɔ́ pāssə̀-zɛ̀, í hīhī kʰàrí̋-tɔ̀
2SG pass-COND, 1SG DEM give-FUT
'If you pass, I will give you this.'

b. nɔ́ pʰɛ̆rí̋-mɔ̀-zɛ̀, í hīhī kʰàrí̋-hɔ̀
2SG come-NEG-COND, 1SG DEM give-NEG
'If you don't come, I will not give you this.'

Conditional constructions in Chokri, marked by **/-zɛ̀/**, highlight hypothetical scenarios dependent on specific conditions. These constructions are common in Tibeto-Burman languages, where conditional and counterfactual meanings are often encoded with the same marker (DeLancey, 2015).

(100) Hypothetical mood /-zə̋/

a. nɔ́ lə̄vā tì-zɛ̀ mà-sá̋-tɔ̀-zə̋
2SG food eat-COND grow-more-FUT-HYP
'If you eat food, you would have grown more.'

b. í m̥ʰānɛ́-zɛ̀ tɛ̄dʒə̆ mə̄tə́ ɹə̄və́-tɔ̀-zə̋
1SG rich-COND world all travel-FUT-HYP
'If I was rich, I would travel the whole world.'

(101) Declarative /indicative mood /-lɛ̄/

a. tʰə̄mà sə̄sə̄ ātɔ̀-nɛ́ ʧɛ̄tɾə̄-lɛ̄
person DEM PN-POSS relative-DECL

‘That person is Ato’s relative.’

b. í sə̄də̄ kə̄hūʧέ-lə̄ vɔ́-tɔ̌-lɛ
1SG tomorrow church-LOC go-FUT-DECL
‘I will go to church tomorrow.’

(102) Dubitative mood /-tʰɔ̄/

a. ātɔ̀ hīhī tʰı̋-mɔ̀-tʰɔ̄
PN DEM do-NEG-DUB
‘Ato might not have done this.’

b. ū ā ŋɔ̋-tʰɔ̄
3SG 1SG see-DUB
‘He might have seen me.’

The dubitative mood, marked by **/-tʰɔ̄/**, expresses uncertainty or doubt about an action or event, a feature commonly found in other modal systems (Palmer, 2001).

(103) Concessive mood /-ɾí/

a. í tʰɛ̄ɾí-ɾí, dʒə́ tɾa̋-mɔ̀-tέ
1SG thirst-CONC water drink-NEG-PRF
‘Although I am thirsty, I didn’t drink water.’

b. m̥ʰa̠tʰɔ̀ ɾə̀-vá-ɾí í tʰı̋ tsɔ̄ɔ̀-tέ
work tough-PROG-CONC 1SG do complete.RES-PRF
‘Even though the work was difficult, I completed it.’

(104) Desiderative mood /-n̩sa/

a. í hīhī tì-n̩sā-mɔ̀-lɛ̄
1SG DEM eat-DES-NEG-DECL
‘I don’t want to eat this’

b. í tsālɛ̄ sə̄sə̄ ɾə̄ɲǐ-n̩sā-vá
1SG song DEM listen-DES-PROG
‘I want to listen to that song.’

Cross-linguistically, desiderative markers often co-occur with negation or aspect to add nuance to intention and volition (Palmer, 2001).

k. Case

Chokri exhibits a nominative-accusative alignment, where the subject of an intransitive verb behaves the same as the subject of a transitive verb but is different from the object of a transitive verb. Although the language follows a nominative-accusative pattern, it does not overtly mark the cases. Instead, syntactic structure and word order are crucial for identifying grammatical roles, such as subject and object. This pattern is consistent with other Tibeto-Burman languages, where case marking is often optional or reliant on context and syntactic cues (Comrie, 1989). The examples are shown below:

(105) ātɔ̀ tɾà-vá

PN cry-PROG

'Ato is crying.'

(106) ātɔ̀ ā-vɔ̋
PN 2SG-beat
'Ato beat me.'

(107) í ātɔ̀ ŋɔ̋
1SG PN see
'I saw Ato.'

(108) ātɔ̀ kə̄tsə̌ kʰǎ ā-pə̀
PN stone INST 1SG-hit
'Ato hit me with a stone.'

These examples demonstrate that Chokri relies on syntactic structure, particularly word order, to clarify grammatical relationships. The absence of overt case marking suggests that the language depends more on the position of words within a sentence, as well as contextual information, to clarify the grammatical relationships between elements in a sentence. Below, we listed specific case markers in Chokri:

(109) Locative case /-lə̄/

a. n̄-bə̄lā tʰɛbə̋-lə̄-bá
2SG-shirt seat-LOC-EXST
'Your shirt is on the chair/seat.'

b. ū sə̄dō pʰɔ̋-lə̄ kí-tɔ̌-vá
3SG tomorrow village-LOC go down-FUT-PROG
'He is going down to the village tomorrow.'

(110) Benefactive case /-lá/

a. ə̋vɔ́-nō ātɔ̀-lá hīhī tʰrɪ̋-lɛ̄
PN-NOM PN-BEN this buy-DECL
'Avo bought this for Ato.'

b. í hīhī nɛ̄-kɔ̄-lá pə̄ə́ vɔ́rɪ̋
1SG this 2-PL-BEN take.PROG come
'I brought this for you.'

(111) Instrumental case /-kʰǎ /

a. í zɛ̄ pə̄-kʰǎ tʰì dá
1SG machete take-INS meat chop
'I chop meat with a machete.'

b. fɛ̄tsə̄-lɛ̄vū pə̄-kʰǎ káà-tɛ̄
rice-ladle take-INS scoop-IMP

'Use ladle to scoop.'

(112) Terminative case /-kɔ̄tsɔ̌/

a. hīhī-kɔ̄tsɔ̌ pʰɛ̆rí̋-tɛ
DEM-TERM come-IMP
'Come till here.'

b. í bǎ pūŋǔ-kɔ̄tsɔ̌ n̥-fɔ̋-tɔ̀-hɔ̄
1SG time five-TERM 2SG-wait-FUT-IMP
'I will wait for you till five O'clock.'

(113) Temporal case /-ʧɛ́/

a. āwú bǎ pūŋǔ-ʧɛ́ kɔ̄sɔ̌-tɔ̀-hɔ̄
1DL time five-TEMP meet-FUT-IMP
'We will meet at five O'clock.'

b. ú-kɔ̄ tɔ̄sə̀-ʧɛ́ pʰɔ̋-lū kʰɔ́-tɔ̀-hɔ̄
1-PL winter-TEMP village-LOC go-FUT-IMP
'We will go to the village during winter.'

(114) Comitative case /-zɔ̋/

a. ātò-nɔ̄ tɛ̄ʧə́-zɔ̋ dùkā-lū pʰɛ̆ -tɛ́
PN-NOM dog-COMI shop-LOC go-PRF
'Ato went to (a) shop with the dog.'

b. í ā-mī lɛ̄ ā-nā-ní-zɔ̋ tàlɛ̆-tɔ̆ -lɛ̄
1SG 1POSS-uncle and 1POSS-aunt-DU-COMI roam-FUT-DECL
'I am going to go out with my uncle and aunt.'

(115) Causal case /-lá/

a. ū-kɔ̄-mɔ̄tsə̀-lá ū pāssə̀-mɔ̀-tɛ́
3-NOM-lazy-CAUS 3SG pass-NEG-PRF
'He did not pass because of his laziness.'

b. ū-kɔ̄-trí̋-lá ā-pɔ̄ ā-kɔ̄tʰī
3SG-mistake-CAUS 1POSS-father 1SG-scold
'My father scolded me because of his mistake.'

(116) Possessive case /-zā/ & /-nɛ́/

a. tɛ̄ʃə́ hīhī ātɔ̀-zā-lɛ̄
dog this PN-POSS-DECL
'This is Ato's dog.'

b. āvɔ́-zā bɔ̄lā mɛ̄dìí̋-lɛ̄
PN-POSS shirt loss.PERF-DECL
'Avo's shirt is lost.'

c. hīhī ātɔ̀-nɛ́ ʧɛ́ lɛ̄
this PN-POSS house DECL
'This is Ato's house.'

d. tʰɔ̄mà sɘ̄sɘ̄ ātɔ̀-nɛ́ ʧɛ̄tɾɔ̄ lɛ̄
person DEM PN-POSS relative DECL
'That person is Ato's relative.'

There are two possessive markers, viz., /-zā/ and /-nɛ/. The marker /-zā/ is used to indicate possession of a singular noun, while /-nɛ/ is employed to signify collective possession.

(117) **Focus/Emphasis Marker /-nɔ̄/**

Focus marker /-nɔ̄/ highlights or emphasizes the word. This is used when the speaker wants to make it clear who the main actor is, drawing special attention to the subject. For instance, in response to a question like "Who is crying?" one might say:

a. ātɔ̀-nɔ̄-lɛ̄
PN-FOC-DECL
'it is/was Ato' (emphasizing on Ato as in "It is Ato who (ate/beat etc.)").

The use of the -nɔ̄ marker adds emphasis to "Ato," suggesting a greater focus on Ato as the one performing the action, possibly in contrast to others who might not be crying.

Interestingly, in Chokri, the focus marker /-nɔ̄/ is a homophonous morpheme that is quite versatile and serves more than just marking the focus of a sentence. It has three main functions: it marks focus, agentivity, and topicality.

(118) **Marking Agentivity**

The /-nɔ̄/ marker can also denote the agent (the one performing the action) in sentences where word order deviates from the usual pattern. It helps clarify who is carrying out the action, even if the agent does not appear in the expected position. For example:

a. ŋɛ̆ʙ̥ɘ̄-kʰă āvɔ̋ tsɘ̀-lɛ̄ ātɔ̀-nɔ̄
fower-INST PN give-DECL PN-A
'Ato gave flower to Mary.'

In this sentence, although "Ato" appears at the end, /-nɔ̄/ makes it clear that Ato is the agent performing the action of giving the flower.

(119) Marking Topic

In Chokri, the marker /-nɔ̄/ also functions as a topicalizer, which indicates that the element marked is the topic or the primary subject of conversation. When /-nɔ̄/ marks the topic, it highlights the element that the sentence is about, rather than focusing on new or contrasting information.

a. ŋɛ̆ʙ̥ɘ̄-kʰă āvɔ̋ tsɘ̀ɘ̋-ɔ̄-nɔ̄ ātɔ̀-lɛ̄
flower-INST PN give-DEF-TOP PN-DECL
'The one who gave a flower to Avo is Ato.'

To summarize, the /-nɔ̄/ marker in Chokri goes beyond simply marking the one case. It can emphasize the subject, clarify who is doing the action (even with non-standard word order), and mark the topic of the sentence.

In Chokri, the language relies on adding extra morphemes or particles to express important grammatical information rather than embedding this information directly into the root words themselves. This means that Chokri words often require the use of several additional markers to convey their meaning fully. As a result, the language has a high level of morphological complexity, where understanding a single word can involve recognizing many possible variations in its form, based on tense, aspect, mood, and other factors.

6. Word formation

Word formation refers to the creation of new words and falls under the domain of derivational morphology (Haokip, 2014). In Chokri, new words can be created from existing words through processes such as derivational affixation, compounding, and reduplication. Derivational affixes typically change the grammatical category of a word, unlike inflectional affixes, which modify meaning without altering grammatical class.

Chokri words may be morphologically simple, consisting of an independent morpheme that can stand alone, such as **/phu/** 'search.' Alternatively, they may be morphologically complex, combining two or more morphemes (bound or free), as in **/lɛsi-da-kɔ/** 'books.'

I. Derivation by Affixation

Chokri demonstrates a robust system of affixation for word formation, utilizing prefixes, suffixes, and circumfixes to derive new words.

i. The nominalizer prefix /kə̄-/ or /ɛ̄/[4]

The derivational prefix /**kə̄-**/ or /**ɛ̄**/ functions as a nominalizer in Chokri. Nominalizations are highly productive in Tibeto-Burman languages (DeLancey, 2015) and enable the transformation of action and stative verbs into nouns. In Chokri, verbal and adjectival roots are nominalized by adding the prefix /**kə̄-**/.

(120)	Chokri	Gloss	Prefix kɘ-	Gloss
	mə̄lə̄	believe	kə̄-mə̄lə̄	Belief
	pālí̋	argue	kə̄-pālí̋	Argument
	kʰɾə̋	to love	kə̄-kʰɾə̋	love
	və̋	to beat	kə̄-və̋	fight
	ɹə̄thī	to converse	kə̄-ɹə̄thī	conversation
	mɛ̄tsə̄	lazy	kə̄-mɛ̄tsə̄	laziness
	mɛ̄tsɛ̋	brilliant	kə̄-mɛ̄tsɛ̋	brilliance

[4] The prefix /kə̄-/ and /ɛ̄-/ are synonyms. They are nominalizers used to derive nouns from verbs and adjectives in Chokri. The prefix /kə̄-/ is used by majority of the Chokri varieties, while the usage of /ɛ̄-/ is limited to the Thipuzu Village variety, native tongue of the first author. In this paper, the prefix /kə̄-/ is used for general understanding.

When a compound word is nominalized, the nominalizer /kə̄/ shifts to an infix position, inserted between the two compounded morphemes:

(121) Chokri	Gloss	infix -kɘ-	Gloss
hʉ̋-vɛ̋	Appearance-good (beautiful)	hʉ̋-kə̄-vɛ̋	Beauty
hʉ̋-ʃə̀	Appearance-bad (ugly)	hʉ̋-kə̄-ʃə̀	Crudeness
tì-vɛ̋	Eat-good (tasty)	tì-kə̄-vɛ̋	Tasty (n)
tì-ʃə̀	Eat-bad (insipid)	tì-kə̄-ʃə̀	Insipid (n)

ii. The nominalizer prefix /tʰɛ̄-/

Another derivational prefix, **/tʰɛ̄-/**, is used to derive nouns from verbal roots:

(122) Chokri	Gloss	Prefix thɛ-	Gloss
dʒɔ́	to bless	tʰɛ̄-dʒɔ̋	blessing
ɾ̥ɔ̄	to respect	tʰɛ̄-ɾ̥ɔ̄	respect
bə́	to defecate	tʰɛ̄-bə̋	faeces
bá	to sit	tʰɛ̄-bá̋	seat

iii. The agent nominalizer suffix /-mì/

To derive agent nouns from verbs, Chokri uses the prefix **/kə̄-/** combined with the agent nominalizer suffix **/-mì/**. While **/kə̄/** can occur without **/-mì/** in nominalized forms, it is incomplete for agent nouns. This pattern aligns with the flexibility of nominalization observed in Tibeto-Burman languages (Noonan, 1997).

(123) Chokri	Gloss	Prefix kɘ-	Suffix -mi	Gloss
mə̄tʰá̋	teach	kə̄-mə̄tʰá̋	kə̄-mə̄tʰá̋-mì	Teacher
ɹə̄gɔ̀	steal	kə̄-ɹə̄gɔ̀	kə̄-ɹə̄gɔ̀-mì	Thief
mə̄lə̄	believe	kə̄-mə̄lə̄	kə̄-mə̄lə̄-mì	Believer
sā	dead	kə̄-sā	kə̄-să-mì	dead people

iv. The causative prefix /mɛ̄-/

Causative constructions in Chokri indicate that a subject causes someone or something to perform an action. These are derived from verbal roots by adding the prefix **/mɛ̄-/**.

(124) Chokri	Gloss	prefix mɛ-	Gloss
tì	eat	mɛ̄-ti	feed/cause to eat
tɾá̋	drink	mɛ̄-tɾá̋	cause to drink
tà	run	mɛ̄-tà	cause to run
zə̀	sleep	mɛ̄-zə̀	cause to sleep
tʰà	stand	mɛ̄-tʰà	cause to stand

m. Derivation by compounding

Compounding is a word formation process in which new words are formed by combining at least two bases that can occur as independent words. In Chokri, compounding is highly productive, resulting in a variety of compound word types. These compounds can be categorized based on their semantic properties into *endocentric compounds* and *exocentric compounds*, consistent with typological descriptions of compounding in Tibeto-Burman languages (Comrie, 1989).

i. Endocentric compound

Endocentric compounds are characterized by a head constituent that determines the overall meaning of the compound. In Chokri, most compound words are endocentric, further classified into **right-headed** and **left-headed** compounds.

1. Right-headed Compounds

In right-headed compounds, the first root modifies the second root, which serves as the semantic head. Examples from Chokri include:

(125) sə́ + fə̄ > sə́fə̄
wood + plate > wooden plate
(126) fɛ̄tsə̄ + lɛ́ > fɛ̄tsə̄lɛ́
rice + pot > rice pot
(127) mɛ̄fĭ + dʒə̋ > mɛ̄fĭdʒə̋
bee + water > honey

(128) m̥ʰə̀ + má > m̥ʰə̄má
eye + hair > eyelash
(129) lɛ̄si̋ + ʧɛ́ > lɛ̄si̋ʧɛ́
book + house > school

2. Left-headed Compounds

In left-headed compounds, the second root modifies the first root, which serves as the semantic head. Examples include:

(130) fə̄ + pʰɛ̄ > fə̄pʰɛ̄
plate + feet > plate with stand
(131) dʒə́ + kə̄ʒɔ́ > dʒə́kə̄ʒɔ́
water + big > ocean
(132) dʒə́ + lə̄ > dʒə̄lə̆
water + warm > warm water
(133) mà + tʰɔ̆ > mātʰɔ̆
person + truth > honest person
(134) fə̋ + n̥ʰī > fə̋n̥ʰī
fish + snake > eel

ii. Exocentric compound

Exocentric compounds lack a semantic head, meaning the overall meaning of the compound does not directly relate to its components. Exocentric compounding in Chokri is less productive compared to endocentric compounding, aligning with observations in other Tibeto-Burman languages (Noonan, 1997).

(135) hə̄ + mɛ̄vɛ̋ > hə̄mɛ̄vɛ̋
live + good > rich/beautiful
(136) hə̄ + mɛ̄ʃə̀ > hə̄mɛ̄ʃə̀
live + bad > poor/ disabled

6.2.3. Coordinate compound

Coordinate compounds consist of two roots of equal status with no semantic head. These roots may be interrelated or opposite in meaning. Coordinate compounds are common in Chokri and serve to denote relationships or collectives.

(137) úpɔ́ + úzŭ > úpɔ́úzŭ
our father + our mother > parents
(138) mɛ̄fə̄ + tɛ̄hɛ̋ > mɛ̄fə̄tɛ̄hɛ̋
plate + cup > utensils
(139) tə́ + tɛ̄dʒə̆ > tə́tɛ̄dʒə̆
sky + land > universe
(140) fə̀ + mə̄nɛ̋ > fə̀mə̄nɛ̋
shawl + pants > clothes
(141) tʰɛ̄bă̋ + tʰɛ̄zí̋ > tʰɛ̄bă̋tʰɛ̄zi
seat + bed > furniture

6.3. Derivation by Reduplication

Reduplication is a morphological process by which new words are formed through the repetition of a word or a word-like element. In Chokri, reduplication is categorized into two types: *partial reduplication* and *complete reduplication***.** Partial reduplication involves the repetition of a part of the word, while complete reduplication involves the repetition of the entire word without any changes. This process is common in many Tibeto-Burman languages, where reduplication often conveys semantic nuances such as plurality, intensification, or distributive meaning (Comrie, 1989). Reduplication in Chokri serves to pluralize, intensify, or indicate a sense of distribution in the meaning of the base word.

(142) Intensification and Pluralization

í sə́ ʒɔ́-ɾī-ɾī-zə̋ ŋɔ̋
1SG tree big-INTS-RED-like see
'I saw very big-big trees.'

(143) Distribution

í lɛ̄sí̋ tʰɔ̋-thɔ̋-vɔ́ a-bɛ thīí-tɛ́
1SG book write-RED-PART 1POSS-hand ache.PROG-PFV
'I kept on writing, and my hand is aching' (writing repeatedly).

In these examples, **ʒɔ́-ɾī-ɾī** intensifies the meaning of “big,” and **tʰɔ̋-thɔ̋** conveys repetitive or distributive action.

Reduplication in Chokri is phonologically driven, with the syllabic structure of a word determining its reduplicated form. Monosyllabic words undergo full reduplication, where the entire syllable is repeated. For instance, a monosyllabic word like *ti* would become *ti-ti* through full reduplication. However, disyllabic words undergo partial reduplication, with the final syllable being repeated. For example, a disyllabic word like *tanɛ* would be reduplicated as *tanɛ-nɛ*. This phonological sensitivity aligns with patterns observed in other Tibeto-Burman languages, where reduplication serves as a flexible morphological strategy shaped by phonotactic constraints (Noonan, 1997).

(144) Complete reduplication

In complete reduplication, the entire word is repeated without any phonological changes. This process often conveys meanings such as intensification or distribution.

a. ɲù + ɲù > ɲùɲù (very soft)
b. pə̀ + pə̀ > pə̀pə̀ (one each/one one)
c. pɾə́ + pɾə́ > pɾə́pɾə́ (shiny/glittery)

(145) Partial reduplication

In partial reduplication, only a part of the word is repeated, usually the final syllable. This process frequently conveys distributive or iterative meaning.

a. ʧɛ́lì + lì > ʧɛ́lìlì (every household)
b. kɔ̄lɛ̆ + lɛ̆ > kɔ̄lɛ̆lɛ̆ (slowly)
c. kɔ̄nā + nā > kɔ̄nānā (two each/two two)
d. kɔ̄tsə́ + tsə́ > kɔ̄tsə́tsə́ (small small)

Reduplication in Chokri carries several semantic functions. Examples include (i) *pluralization*, denoting multiple entities, as in **ʧɛ́lìlì** (‘every household’), (ii) *intensification, which* enhances the degree of quality, as in **pɾə́pɾə́** (‘shiny/glittery’), and, (iii) *distribution,* indicating repetitive or distributive action, as in **kɔ̄nānā** (‘two each’).

The productive nature of reduplication in Chokri mirrors trends in many Tibeto-Burman languages, where this process contributes to the rich morphological system and semantic versatility of the language (DeLancey, 2015).

7. Conclusion

Chokri exhibits a rich and intricate system of inflectional and derivational morphology, highlighting its complexity and the depth of its grammatical structure. The language employs a variety of inflectional morphemes to denote grammatical features such as tense, aspect, mood, number, and gender. The inflectional system of Chokri, with its multiple affixes for different grammatical distinctions, demonstrates its highly inflectional nature. The language’s inflectional morphology encompasses several layers such as Numbers, Gradation, Diminutive, Gender, Tense, Aspect, Mood, and Case. The derivational morphology of Chokri, including the use of

nominalizer prefixes and the processes of affixation, compounding, and reduplication, further contributes to its morphological richness. The language's capacity for word formation through both simple and complex morphological structures reveals its flexibility and depth.

Chokri's morphological complexity reflects its extensive use of inflectional and derivational processes, contributing to a robust system for expressing a wide range of grammatical and semantic features. This intricacy not only characterizes Chokri as a language with a rich morphological system but also provides insight into the linguistic strategies employed by its speakers to convey nuanced meaning. Despite our current understanding, much of Chokri's intricate structure remains unexplored. More comprehensive research is needed to fully uncover and document the deeper layers of its morphological and syntactic patterns, especially in under-researched areas like its verb inflections, case marking, and phonological processes. This would enrich our understanding of the language and its place within the broader Tibeto-Burman family.

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Context-Based English Language Teaching and Acquisition: The Significance of OTT Platforms

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A B S T R A C T

Rote Learning, practice of memorization and testing knowledge as facts has greatly affected education. Similar strategies used in language learning have slowed down the process of language teaching and learning. Research shows that 'usable knowledge' is gained through context based education. A mere knowledge about a fact will not serve the purpose. Understanding its functions and operations and knowing how to use it to solve problems alone will aid in materializing the facts learnt. Context based education models are being used in the field of language teaching and learning for effective results and for the students to gain 'usable knowledge'. Streaming services such as OTT platforms are widely being used at present. OTT platforms deliver content such as movies, series, documentaries and Podcasts over the internet. This research paper aims at experimenting the role of OTT platforms as a tool in Context-Based English Language Teaching and English Language Acquisition.

Introduction

A language is a system of communication used by human beings to express themselves. Languages are acquired and learnt and every human being strives to master at least one language in her/his lifetime to survive and compete in this fast moving world. Humans develop language formally and informally, formally through academics and informally by placing themselves in an environment where people around them speak the target language. Mostly, Language learning happens in a formal set up and language acquisition happens in an informal set up.

Due to COVID-19, people spend most of their time at home. This has made them use OTT platforms frequently. OTT stands for 'Over the Top'. It refers to a streaming service that uses the Internet to deliver video content. People were dependent on cable TV providers for the supply and availability of TV programmes. But now with the help of internet connection people access OTT services like Netflix, Amazon Prime and they decide what to consume. Many people have started to subscribe to OTT platforms on a monthly basis. Since OTT platforms are full with movies and series pertaining to various languages used worldwide, fortunately people have the privilege to listen to a wide variety of languages used around the world. This research paper aims at experimenting the role of OTT platforms as a tool in Context- Based English Language Teaching and English Language Acquisition.

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Literature Review

In recent decades, language learning has changed dramatically, shifting from traditional rote memorization to more immersive and context-based methods, especially in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) circumstances. Context-Based Language Teaching and Acquisition (CBLTA) is one such approach, emphasizing the use of real-life scenarios to help learners acquire "usable knowledge" (Burns & Siegel, 2017). This literature review examines the foundations of CBLTA, the cognitive and practical benefits of context-based language learning, and the role of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms as an innovative tool for language exposure and acquisition.

Historically, language learning has heavily relied on rote memorization and repetitive exercises, often isolating vocabulary and grammar from meaningful contexts (Doff, 2018). Although this method might give students basic language skills, it is not applicable in the real world. Because they have set phrases and norms to memory without knowing how they are actually used, learners frequently find it difficult to apply the language in natural settings.O'Brien (2011) highlights that traditional teaching methods focus on knowledge transmission but fail to equip learners with "usable knowledge," which is necessary for effective communication. This gap has prompted teachers to look for more efficient, real-life -applicable language teaching strategies.

Context-Based Language Teaching and Acquisition (CBLTA) emerged as a response to the limitations of traditional methods, emphasizing a more holistic approach to language learning. CBLTA prioritizes the practical application of language skills within authentic or simulated real-world contexts, facilitating deeper cognitive connections and retention (Newton & Nation, 2020). The key to CBLTA lies in its focus on context, which helps learners understand the functional use of language rather than memorizing abstract vocabulary or grammar rules. By creating specific scenarios—whether through dialogues, role-play, or multimedia content—CBLTA encourages students to connect language with context, enabling better retention and fluency.

In conclusion, the literature suggests that OTT platforms represent a promising medium for facilitating context-based language learning, particularly in ESL and EFL contexts.

Context Based Language Teaching and Acquisition

Language acquisition happens during childhood and Language learning happens when the child is put through formal education. Language acquisition during childhood mostly happens through listening. A child listens in a fixed context till it reaches the age of speaking. Constant listening helps the child to acquire language skills. A child starts to speak three word phrases at the age of 3. Till the age of 3 the child listens to the language spoken by people around it in a fixed context. This proves that listening in a fixed context plays a vital role in language acquisition. The child learns to read and write its mother tongue only after it starts attending school. Till then the child acquires its mother tongue by listening to its parents and relatives. Since Listening is vital in Language acquisition, it has become an integral part of communication and language Skills. Listening being one of the four major skills in language acquisition plays a major role in language expertise. Being receptive to listening improves language ability, especially the ability to speak the target language fluently. Listening also helps the learner to acquire the sound, rhythm, and intonation of the target language.

Second Language learners who know how to read and write have difficulty in speaking the language fluently because of lack of space or opportunity to listen to the language in a fixed

context. In order to improve speaking skills one has to listen to the target language regularly every day. In an ESL or EFL classroom students, learn the target language by reciting, remembering and visualizing scenes in their minds. Reciting and Visualizing without a fixed context has its own limitations. Context Based Language Teaching and Acquisition (CBLTA) helps the ESL and EFL learners to practically experience the visualized scenes and this greatly aids in Language Acquisition. When the learner relates the lexical units to the surrounding world the learning process aids in language acquisition. CBLTA concentrates on creating a real life and fictitious environment for ESL and EFL learners to practically experience the subject rather than just learning the theoretical parts. This is a student-centered approach. ESL and EFL learners learn the target language by replicating scenarios with social and political context. In an ESL or EFL classroom the Teacher or the facilitator fixes the context and makes students work out the activity. By performing the activity, students not only acquire language but also become clear headed about the right choice of words relevant to the situation. Language Teaching and Acquisition becomes successful only when the language is taught and acquired in a fixed context.

The Importance of Context and Listening in Language Acquisition

Listening is an essential component of language acquisition and plays a significant role in the early stages of language learning. Goh and Burns (2012) emphasize that listening is the foundational skill upon which other language abilities, such as speaking and comprehension, are built. Language acquisition theory posits that continuous exposure to the target language in meaningful contexts allows learners to internalize its structures and vocabulary naturally, just as native speakers do from a young age. When learners are exposed to language through listening in relevant contexts, they not only improve their comprehension but also acquire an intuitive understanding of tone, rhythm, and phrasing, which are crucial for fluency (Downs, 2008).

Covid 19 and OTT platforms

Covid 19 pandemic has made people live behind closed doors. This has also given way for people to subscribe to OTT platforms to escape boredom and loneliness. OTT stands for “Over The Top” and refers to any streaming service that delivers content over the internet. OTT platform mostly contains movies, series, documentaries and Podcasts. OTT is slowly replacing satellite television. Covid19 pandemic and the lockdown that followed has forced OTT subscribers to binge watch and listen to movies, series, podcasts and documentaries which are predominantly in English.

When OTT platforms are used by the subscribers to watch movies the visuals on the screen provides the context and the viewers understand the visuals by listening to the dialogues. This greatly aids in language acquisition by understanding the right choice of words relevant to the situation. Since Listening skills play a vital role in Language Acquisition and OTT platforms provide a space for the subscribers to listen to English Language in a fixed context within their comfort zone,OTT platforms can be used as a tool in a CBLTA classroom. In order to confirm the role of OTT platform in Context -Based English Language Learning and Acquisition a questionnaire was prepared using Google form and the subscribers were asked to fill in the questionnaire.

Methodology and Results

The main objective of this study is to explore the impact of OTT platforms in language acquisition. A questionnaire was prepared and the subscribers of OTT platforms were asked to fill in the questionnaire. A Google Forms survey was administered to OTT users who consume content in English or other foreign languages. The survey included questions on usage frequency, language preferences, and self-assessed improvements in listening, speaking, and vocabulary skills. Of the 169 participants, most were frequent OTT users, and 69% agreed that using these platforms enhanced their language abilities.

The questions and the response received are discussed below.169 participants participated in the study. 72.2% of the participants agree that they use OTT platforms whenever they get time off from work and household chores. 53.8% of the participants agree that they spend at least 1 hour per day on OTT platforms whereas 47% of the participants agree that they spend more than two and more than two hours per day on OTT platforms.44.4% of the participants claimed that they often watch videos in English Language whereas 40% of the participants claim that they often watch videos in foreign language with the aid of subtitles. 50% of the participants agree that OTT platforms helped in improving their listening skills whereas 40% of the participants agree that OTT platforms helped in improving speaking skills. 92% of the participants agree that their vocabulary in second language or foreign language has widened with the usage of OTT platforms. 74% of the participants have used subtitles to watch videos. 69 % of the participants agree that their language skills have improved after starting to use OTT platforms.

Participant Demographics and OTT Usage Frequency:

Category	Percentage (%)
Age (18-25)	40%
Age (26-35)	35%
Age (36+)	25%
Daily OTT Usage (1+ hrs)	53.8%
Daily OTT Usage (>2 hrs)	47%

Table 1

Self-Reported Language Skills Improved via OTT Platforms:

Language Skill	Percentage of Participants (%)
Listening	50%
Speaking	40%
Vocabulary Expansion	92%

Table 2

Survey Responses on the Role of OTT Platforms in Language Skill Development:

Survey Question	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)
"OTT helps improve my listening skills."	45%	30%	15%	10%
"Watching English content on OTT expands my vocabulary."	60%	32%	6%	2%
"I can better understand English accents and dialects.	48%	38%	10%	4%

Table 3

Screenshots of the Survey conducted using Google form

Fig 1.

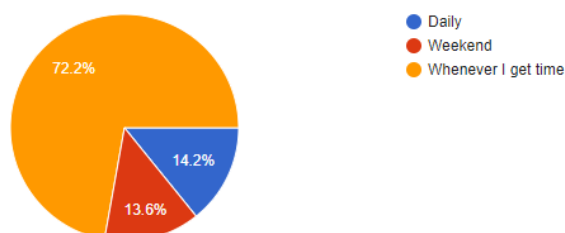



Fig 2.

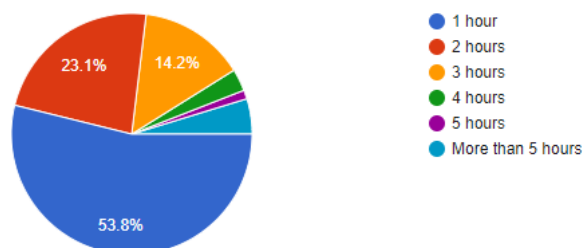



Fig 3.

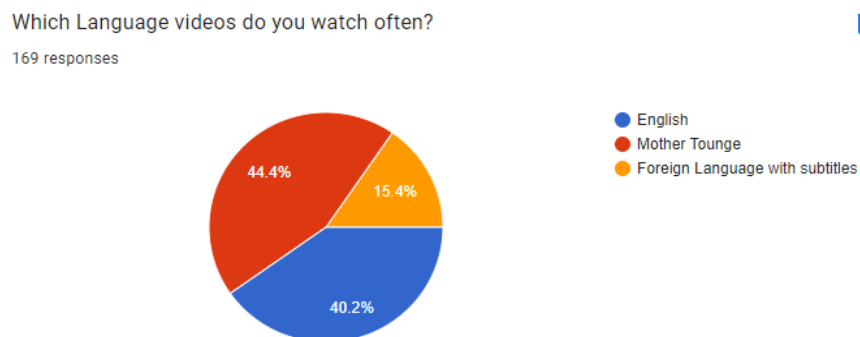
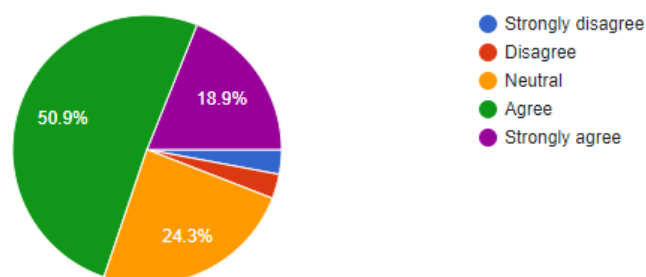



Fig 4.

69% of the participants agree that OTT platforms are helpful in improving language skills.

Conclusion

New opportunities for language learning have been made possible by the development of digital technology and multimedia resources, especially through audio-visual content available on platforms like over-the-top (OTT) services. According to Hall (2016), multimedia language resources, such as films, series, and documentaries, provide immersive environments for language exposure. OTT platforms allow users to experience language in context through dialogues, interactions, and scenarios that reflect natural speech patterns and idiomatic expressions. These platforms, which are increasingly popular in informal language learning contexts, serve as valuable tools for CBLTA by providing real-life contexts for language use. Studies have shown that integrating multimedia resources into language teaching enhances engagement and supports language retention, as it allows learners to associate language with visual and situational cues (Molla, 2012).

Listening plays a vital role in Language Acquisition. Listening to the target language in a fixed context helps the learner to acquire language skills. In order to master language skills, the learners should be placed in an environment where they are constantly exposed to the target language. A learner of a Second Language has limited access to an environment, which exposes the learner to the target language, due to various factors. Even if the learner has boundless access to an environment, which exposes the learner to the target language, the environment is always a classroom. The Learner can spend only a limited amount of time in a classroom. The learner has

to expose herself/himself to the target language even beyond the classroom to master language skills. Thus, OTT platforms can be used as a tool by Second Language Learners to constantly expose themselves to the Target Language in a fixed context. Language teachers and facilitators can also use OTT platforms in their classroom for effective language teaching and acquisition.

The data collected proves that subscribers of OTT platforms mostly watch videos in Second Language or Foreign Language. Majority of the participants agree that their English Language Skills and Foreign Language Skills have improved after starting to use OTT platforms. The participants have specifically mentioned that their listening skills and speaking skills have improved. Participants strongly agree that OTT platforms are helpful in acquisition of second language and foreign language. While CBLTA plays a major role in language, teaching and acquisition OTT platforms can be used as a tool in language acquisition process. Context based learning happens when learners use OTT platforms. The videos on OTTs are based on a context and dialogues delivered will be easily comprehensible based on the visuals on the screen. The subtitles on the screen also help the learners to widen their vocabulary. OTTs help the ESL and EFL learners to watch, listen and read simultaneously. Thus, OTT platforms aid in Context Based English Language Teaching and English Language Acquisition.

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Types and Functions of Reduplication in Tangkhul

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the morphosemantic aspects of reduplication in Tangkhul (Hunphun) language following the Morphological Doubling Theory (MDT) of Inkelas & Zoll (2005). Tangkhul is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken mostly in Ukhrul district of Manipur in India, by around 183,115 speakers (2011 census). Tangkhul remains little studied when compared to other Tibeto-Burman languages. This study shows that reduplication in Tangkhul is one productive morphological device and many interpretations are derived by copying word bases. This paper is primarily based on data compiled in Khangrah (2024). In Tangkhul, both full and partial reduplication is employed where content as well as function words undergo reduplication. Reduplication applies to several parts of speech, such as noun, pronoun, verb, adjective and adverb. Reduplication of expressives or lexicalized reduplication, name doubling, motherese, question word and onomatopoeic reduplication are other types of reduplication found in the language. In Tangkhul, reduplication has wide range of functions— of showing plurality, iteration/repetition, distribution, intensification, continuation, reflexivity, reciprocalness, frequency, habituality, continuity, approximation, diversity, collectivity, entirety, abundance, augmentation, exaggeration, simplification, variety, synchronization, simultaneity and accentuation. Most categories undergo reduplication to convey several semantic functions. And the same semantic function can be conveyed in several categories. A reduplicated form may also convey more than one semantic function. The common syntactic changes associated with reduplication is inflection such as adding plurality, repetition or intensity. Moreover, Tangkhul is a language in which reduplication is largely iconic, where a reduplicated form may intensify for plurality, frequency, continuation, augmentation, etc.

1. Introduction

Reduplication is a process of word-formation in which meaning is expressed by repeating all or part of a word. Inkelas & Downing (2015: 502) define reduplication as, “Reduplication involves the doubling of some component of a morphological base for some morphological purpose”. According to Rubino (2005: 11, from Huang 2023: 1), “Reduplication involves a systematic repetition of some components of a word with a semantic or grammatical purpose”. In Abbi (1990: 171), it is explicated that reduplication may refer to the iteration of syllables which are not lexical items nor part of lexical items but which constitute a single word/lexeme only after it is being reduplicated.

Reduplication can generally be divided into full reduplication in which an entire word/lexical item is reduplicated and partial reduplication where only a part of a lexical item (a segment, a syllable, or a morpheme) is reduplicated. In the words of Inkelas and Downing (2015:

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504) "Total reduplication reduplicates the entire morphological base while partial reduplication duplicates some phonologically characterizable subpart". The term 'reduplicant' is used to refer to the copied part of a word, while the term 'base' refers to the root to which the reduplication process applies. Reduplication can also be inflectional or derivational. Inflectional process does not change the lexical identity but only gives grammatical meaning while the derivational process forms new words with lexical identities different from the base.

According to Inkelas and Zoll (2005), there are two basic approaches to reduplication: phonological copying and morpho-semantic feature reduplication. Phonological copying copies the whole or part of a phonological constituent, feature, or segment while morpho-semantic feature reduplication is triggered by a morphological process of reduplication which generates a new semantic function. Travis (2001) has argued for three types of reduplication: phonological (reduplication that is sensitive to phonological domains), syntactic (reduplication that is subject to syntactic constraints) and contrastive reduplication (from Ghomeshi et al.2000) in which reduplication involves copying of words and phrases to give a real or a prototypical reading to the copied element (Almasadani & Taibah 2019).

There are two major kinds of reduplication available in Tibeto-Burman (TB) languages according to Abbi (1990): morphological and lexical. "Morphological reduplication is where the minimally meaningful and segmentally indivisible morphemes are constituted of iterated syllables" (Abbi 1990: 171). Lexical reduplication is composed of echo formation, compounding and word reduplication. In both morphological and lexical reduplication, each reduplicated structure constitutes a single lexical category.

Reduplication has the recognised functions of showing plurality, variety, simultaneity, continuity, collectivity, iteration, diminution, emphasis, approximation, accentuation, distribution, manner, diversity, delimitation, resemblance, concession, diversity, reciprocity, similarity, entirety, frequency, contrast, abundance, augmentation, exaggeration, inclusivity, totalitativity, concomitance, forming polar questions and new words. Operations like applicativisation, negation, and case marking are some functions that are commonly morphologically encoded but seem rarely to be reduplicative in form (Inkelas & Downing 2015: 504). Likewise, not every morphological function is equally likely to be encoded through reduplication. Quirk et al. (1985) add that most reduplicatives are highly informal or familiar, and many belong to the sphere of child-parent talk.

2. Research Objectives

In this study, two issues in the morphology of reduplication, namely, what does reduplication copy (i.e., what is the morphological base/composition of the reduplicative morpheme) and what does the reduplicative structure denote (i.e., the semantic function), will be the main focus. The objectives of this paper are to establish the presence of such reduplicative structures in Tangkhul language and explore the semantic nuances that they emote. Phonological aspects regarding reduplicated words are not taken into account.

3. Research Methodology

This study follows the Morphological Doubling Theory (MDT) of Inkelas & Zoll (2005). According to the morphological doubling theory (of the dual theory of reduplication, the other being phonological duplication), morphological reduplication results from the double insertion of a morphological constituent. This morphological doubling can be an entire word, or a stem, a root or an affix. There are two essential morphological insights of MDT. One is that the targets of

reduplication are morphological constituents (affix, root, stem or word), rather than phonological constituents (mora, syllable, foot). The other is that the foundational identity in reduplication is semantic, i. e., the constituents that reduplication doubles are identical semantically, but not necessarily in any other way. According to Inkelas & Zoll (2005: 25), “Morphological Doubling Theory views reduplication as a morphological construction containing some number of daughters – prototypically two – which are identical in their semantic and syntactic features”. For the data analyzed in this study, a wordlist compiled in Khangrah (2024) is taken for reference and example sentences are invented by the author as a native speaker.

4. Discussions

One of the important processes involved in forming Tangkhul words is reduplication. According to Pettigrew (1918: 52), “The Tangkhuls are fond of doubling a word, adding an ornamentation to it.”. Reduplication in this study is broadly classified into full and partial reduplication. They are further subdivided into subsections based on grammatical classes and other classifications where each type of reduplication is examined along with their semantic functions.

4.1 Full reduplication

Full or total reduplication occurs when the entire word is repeated. In Tangkhul, this type of reduplication copies the whole word which may be composed of a morpheme or morphemes that are independent. Full reduplication is found in most word classes viz., noun, pronoun, verb, adjective and adverb. They are also seen in expressives, numeral systems, personal name/name doubling, baby-talk/motherese, onomatopoeia and question word. Thus total reduplication is found in both content and function words. The types of full reduplication found in Tangkhul is discussed in the following subsections.

4.1.1 Noun reduplication

Some monosyllabic roots that are independent and that belong to the class of noun can be reduplicated to form total nominal reduplication. Here, a bare nominal simply undergoes duplication that results into total reduplication, shown in (1) & (2).

(1) *ʃim~ʃim-li va-ləkə pao-hi haŋcipʰun-ro*
house~house-LOC go-and news-DEM spread-IMP
‘Go from house to house and share this news.’

(2) *mi~mi kəcivɯ-li pao-hi ŋəjao-lu*
person~person every-ACC news-this spread-PIMP
‘Spread this news to every person.’

In (1) and (2), the independent nouns reduplicate fully to simultaneously show plurality as well as distributionality. This duplication of nominals takes place in bare monosyllabic nominals that are both animate and inanimate common nouns. However, this is applicable to few nouns and not all monosyllabic independent nouns that are animate or inanimate can be fully reduplicated.

4.1.2 Pronoun reduplication

In Tangkhul, the three personal pronouns (*i-, nə-, a-*) when reduplicated locally are used to indicate plurality. When these personal pronouns are affixed with case and other suffixes they are reduplicated to indicate reflexivity and reciprocalness, which is also the case in other T.B. languages (Abbi 1990; 178[2]). The occurance of local and non-local pronoun reduplication is illustrated in (3), (4) and (5).

(3) *i~i nə~nə a~a mə-ci-lə kʰokkʰə sa-də pəm-lu*
I~I you~you he/she~he/she NEG-say-and united be-MAN sit-PIMP
‘Be united instead of saying me(pl.). you(pl.), they.’

(4) i-/nə-/a-nə i-/nə-/a-li tʰei-jə
I/you/he/she-AGT I/you/he/she see-IND
‘I/You/He/She see my/your/him/her-self.’

(5) *a-tʰum-nə a-tʰum-kʰələttə ŋəhan-nə*
3SG-pl.-AGT 3SG-pl.-self ask-IND
‘They ask themselves.’

4.1.3 Verb reduplication

In the process of full verb reduplication, the verbal bases undergo duplication where it is possible to attach suffixes to these verbal bases. Observe the following sentences:

(6) *i-nə ʃoŋfɯ mə-tʰei-mədə kui~kui-rəgə kʰəra-nə (repetition)*
1SG-AGT road NEG-know-thats.why go.round~go.round-and come-IND
‘I didn't know the way so I went round and round and reached here.’

(7) *i-nə ləŋpoŋ-də zət~zət-ləkə uŋʃuŋ-hao-wə (continuity)*
1SG-AGT all day-ADV walk~walk-and reach-PRF-IND
‘I walked and walked all day and reached.’

(8) *ci-li va~va mə-ci-lo (frequency, habituality, iteration)*
that-LOC go~go NEG-DEM-IMP
'Don't go there often/again and again.’

(9) *i-nə a-li ʃao~ʃáo-mi-hairə̀ (intensity)*
1SG-AGT 3SG-DAT beat~beat-give-keep-FUT
‘I will thoroughly beat him/her up.’

(10) *pipe-ci məzim~məzim-kʰə tɯrɯ uŋ-haorə (continuity)*
pipe-DEM suck~suck-if water come-PRF-FUT
‘If you keep sucking the pipe, water will flow.’

(11) *kʰəŋəniŋ cot-hai-də i-nə pəmkʰui~pəmkʰui cijə (iteration)*

[2]“An important and interesting feature of T .B. languages is to use reduplicated pronouns for reflexivity and reciprocalness” (Abbi 1990; 178).

standing tired-PRF-for 1SG-AGT sit-take~sit-take that-IND
‘Tired of standing I sat down from time to time.’

The above examples (6) to (11) illustrate that verbs in Tangkhul undergo full reduplication to express the functions of iteration/repetition, continuity, frequency, habituality and intensity. Iteration or event repetition/pluralization, in which the action itself takes place several times is a very common function of verb reduplication among languages (Haiman 1980; Inkelas 2014; Lakoff & Johnson 1980, from Almasadani et. al. 2019, Inkelas 2013). It is important to stress that the context of the occurrence of a reduplicated verb plays a vital role in deriving the intended meaning of the construction, which otherwise becomes ambiguous. Only through its context does it become possible to interpret the intended meaning. Another characteristic of verb reduplication is that it is possible for the construction to convey multiple meanings per utterance, exemplified in (8) where it denotes frequency, habituality, and iteration all at once. Moreover, all semantic functions of verb reduplication appear to be iconic, as we shall further observe in prefixed verb reduplication and compound verb reduplication.

Total verb reduplication of prefixed verbs where not only the verbal base but also the formative prefix is duplicated is shown in example sentence (10). When the verbal base is prefixed with the formative prefixes *ci-, kə-~kʰə-, mə-, ŋə-, pʰə-, ʃi-,* and *tʰə-*, the whole construction is reduplicated. As mentioned earlier, without proper context, the semanticity of these reduplicated forms become ambiguous. Construction of total prefixed verb reduplication is shown in the table below.

Fx	**Verb**	**Gloss**	**Reduplicated form**	**Gloss**
ci-	cicap	‘to cut with scissors’	cicapcicap	‘to cut repeatedly/continuously/habitually’
ʃi-	ʃimen	‘to drag’	ʃimenʃimen	‘to drag repeatedly/continuously/habitually’
kʰə-	kʰəròm	‘to chase’	kʰəròmkʰəròm	‘to chase repeatedly/continuously/habitually’
kə-	kəpei	‘to look around’	kəpeikəpei	‘to look around repeatedly/continuously/habitually’
ŋə-	ŋəcei	‘to change’	ŋəceiŋəcei	‘to change repeatedly/continuously/habitually’
pʰə-	pʰərik	‘to sting’	pʰərikpʰərik	‘to sting repeatedly/continuously/habitually’

Fx	Verb	Gloss	Reduplicated form	Gloss
tʰə-	tʰərín	‘to tickle’	tʰəríntʰərín	‘to tickle repeatedly/continuously/habitually’

***Table 1**: Prefixed verb reduplication*

Reduplication of verbal compounds takes place where the compound words function as single components and the whole component of the compound is duplicated, see (11). It is observed that among compounds, only verb compounds are reduplicable. The rest (noun, adjective, adverb, antonym, copulative, synonym, etc. compounds) cannot be reduplicated. Full reduplication of compound verbs are shown in table 2 below.

Type of verb compound	Verb compound	Gloss	Verb compound reduplication	Gloss
[V+V]V	pʰəniŋ-uŋ (think+return)	‘to remember’	pʰəniŋ-uŋ pʰəniŋ-uŋ	‘to remember repeatedly/habitually/continually’
[A+V]V	pʰa-rék (good+feign)	‘to feign goodness’	pʰarék pʰarék	‘to feign goodness repeatedly/habitually/continually’
[V+Adv]V	haŋʃán (say+over)	’to speak on top of’	haŋʃán haŋʃán	’to speak on top of repeatedly/habitually/continually’
[N+V]	məluŋvat (heart+burst)	’to get angry’	məluŋvat məluŋvat	’to get angry repeatedly/habitually/continually’
[N+A]V	kʰonʃi (sound+bad/sad)	’to curse’	kʰonʃi kʰonʃi	’to curse repeatedly/habitually/continually’
[V+A]V	yeŋʃi (look+bad/sad)	‘to hate’	yeŋʃi yeŋʃi	‘to hate repeatedly/habitually/continually’

***Table 2**: Verb compounds and their reduplicated counterparts*

The iconicity of verb reduplication is clearly observed here where the semanticity denotes that the action takes place more than once (pluralization of the action) whether in iteration/repetition, continuity or habituality. As observed in earlier cases, the meaning becomes dependent on the context of usage, whether it be iteration, continuity or habituality.

Reduplication as aspect-marking is seen in '*manman*' where it occurs only in reduplicated form. This form denotes imperfective aspectual category of continuation to show simultaneity or synchronization of two events or actions. It is attached to V1, see (12).

(12) *aton-nə at^{h}ei ʃai-manman-də mətui-jə*
aton-AGT eatable eat-ASP-MAN speak-IND
'Aton spoke as she ate.'

4.1.4 Adjective reduplication

In Tangkhul, adjectives follow nouns in noun phrases and sentences. In this language, adjectives that are prefixed with *kə-~k^{h}ə-* have the ability to be both fully and partially reduplicated. The partiality reduplicated form is likely the shortened form of the fully reduplicated form. This appears to support the proposition that "total reduplication is the diachronic source of partial reduplication (see e.g. Bybee et al. 1994; 1997)" (Inkelas 2013: 24). Here, "Affixes are frequently incidentally reduplicated as part of reduplication processes that target the stems they are part of" (Inkelas 2013: 25), in this case the prefix *kə-~k^{h}ə-*, see example (13).

(13) *hən kətai~kətai-biŋ kətoŋk^{h}ə k^{h}uira-lo*
dish leftover~leftover-pl.suf all bring-IMP
'Bring all the leftover dish.'

The meaning of adjective reduplication becomes that of pluralization of the modified noun. Because of this pluralizing function, the plural suffix -*biŋ* is attached after the word undergoes reduplication. Since the adjectival base is nominalized with *kə-~k^{h}ə-* the combination can itself function like a noun. For example, the reduplicated from of *kətai* 'leftover' is *kətaikətaibiŋ* 'leftovers', which themselves are nouns.

4.1.5 Adverb reduplication

Full reduplication of adverbs are found in this language where both the formative prefixes (*a-, kə-~k^{h}ə-, mə-, ŋə-*) and adverbial bases are reduplicated. Some of these adverbs can be both fully and partially reduplicated. Examples of full reduplication of adverbs are shown in table 3 below. For partial reduplication, only the final syllable is duplicated (for example, *aŋəcáicái, arúirúi, kəsaisai*, with meaning the same as full reduplication).

Word	Gloss	Reduplicated word	Gloss
aŋəcái	'between'	aŋəcái~aŋəcái	'between' (plural)
arúi	'now'	arúi~arúi	'now' (emphasis)
mət^{h}əŋ	'next'	mət^{h}əŋ~mət^{h}əŋ	'next' (succession)
mətai	'more'	mətai~mətai	'more' (plural)
ŋəlém	'adjacent'	ŋəlém~ŋəlém	'adjacent' (plural)
ŋənái	'near'	ŋənái~ŋənái	'near' (intensity)

Word	Gloss	Reduplicated word	Gloss
kəsaikʰə	‘stealthily’	kəsaikʰə~kəsaikʰə	‘very stealthily’ (intensity)

***Table 3**: Reduplication of adverbs*

Adverbs are modifiers of verbs in Tangkhul and they are positioned before the verb, see (14). A suffix *-lui* is used for iteration that is attached after verbal base and this construction is repeated twice, see (15). The iterative function of this reduplication is to show that the referent of the reduplicated adverb has undergone the same situation multiple times. In (16) is illustrated the use of *-nainai* which is positioned after the verb to show the closeness of the action taking place. In all, we have seen that verbal modifiers in Tangkhul perform various functions— to show repetition or to add emphasis and intensity.

(14) *i arúi~arúi/arúi~rúi niŋcaŋ-ŋə (emphasis)*
1SG now~now want-IND
‘I want (it) right now’

(15) *i-nə mə-ʃitsəŋ-mədə ʃolui~ʃolui-də jeŋ-ŋə (repetition)*
1SG-AGT NEG-believe-thats why open.again~open.again-ADV look-IND
‘I did not believe so i open and open to look.’

(16) *həm-ci tatuŋ-nai~nai lei-dəlei (intensity)*
pot-DEM fall-almost~almost have-PRG
‘The pot is about to fall.’

4.1.6 Reduplication of expressives

In reduplication of expressives, the expressives alone have no meaning; except when they are reduplicated do they acquire meaning. This is explicated by Abbi (2018; 10) as, “Almost all (nearly 99 %) reduplicated expressives are formed by iterating a meaningless syllable. The resultant structure thus acquires a meaning, constitutes a single morpheme as well as a single lexeme in that language. An expressive derives its status of a word/lexeme only after it is duplicated, as the non-reduplicated syllable does not exist as a word”.

Lexicalized reduplication is another term that can be used to describe the above phenomenon. It is when the root word must be in the reduplicated form. It refers to the form of reduplication where the word and the root are similar, where the root word has two morphemes and they cannot be separated (Aziz 202: 49, 51).

In Tangkhul the class of words such reduplication occurs is found in nouns, adjectives and adverbs. Examples are provided in table 4 below. The word in the class of nouns functions as a naming word, whereas the words in adjective and adverb classes add a tint of intensity to their meaning after the meaningless syllables are reduplicated.

Word class	Reduplicated expressive/lexicalized word
noun:	t^haŋt^haŋ 'toy'
adjective:	tuntun ʃanʃan 'very busy'
adverb:	p^hap^{h}a 'carelessly'

Table 4: *Reduplication of expressives*

4.1.7 Numeral reduplication

In full reduplication of quantifiers, the root is taken as the base for reduplication while the suffix -*k^hə* is eliminated (except from *ak^hə* 'one') from the numeral and only the numeral base is retained and duplicated for numerals like hundred and thousand (see table 5 below). Numerals from two to ten are reduplicated partially (see §4.2.4), whereas the numeral one is fully reduplicated. See the reduplication of numerals one, hundred and thousand in table 5 below.

Root base	Number	Reduplicated word
k^hə 'one'	ak^hə 'one'	ak^hə~ak^hə 'one by one'
ʃa 'hundred'	ʃak^hə 'hundred'	ʃa~ʃa 'hundreds'
t^hiŋ 'thousand'	t^hiŋk^hə 'thousand'	t^hiŋ~t^hiŋ 'thousands'

Table 5: *Reduplication of numerals*

The reduplication of *ak^hə* 'one' has the effect of showing distributionality, while *ʃaʃa* 'hundreds' and *t^hiŋt^hiŋ* 'thousands' are reduplication of higher numerals that have the collective effect of conveying plurality, approximation, distribution, diversity, collectivity, entirety, abundance, augmentation or exaggeration, depending on the context of use.

Another use of *ak^hə* 'one' reduplication is seen in non-local environment to convey reciprocalness. See (17) below.

(17) *nə-t^hum ak^hə-nə ak^hə-li leiʃi-ŋərok-lu*
2SG-pl.suf one-AGT one-ACC love-REP-PIMP
'Love one another.'

4.1.8 Personal name reduplication/Name doubling

Personal name in Tangkhul is mostly composed of several morphemes joined together. In the formation of hypocoristic names, one of the morphemes is often selected for duplication. Reduplicated names produced by doubling one syllable of longer names are used for simplification of the names for ease of usage and pronunciation and for hypocoristic means. *Soso, ŋəmŋəm, p^hip^hi, tonton, ʃimʃim* are some reduplicated personal names.

4.1.9 Reduplication in baby-talk/motherese

According to Aziz (2020: 45), "Reduplication in baby-talk or motherese occurs when infants begin to speak; they develop such reduplicated words to simplify a process of producing their

lexical items until an infant is able to pronounce words fully". Such words occur in Tangkhul as *tata* 'food/to eat food', *papa* 'to piggyback', *kopkop* 'shoes', etc. They are similar to lexicalised/expressive reduplication in that the reduplicated form alone have lexical meaning, the words exist only in reduplicated structure.

4.1.10 Onomatopoeic reduplication

Onomatopoeia is the formation of word from sound associated with what is named. It is the imitation of sound produced by nature and other things. In Tangkhul, some animals are given nicknames according to the sounds they produce, such as *tutu* 'dog', *mimi* 'cat', *kuku* 'chicken'. Like personal name reduplication and motherese, this reduplication also functions in simplifying the terms by simply referring to the objects by the sounds they make. Consequently, these words are also used in baby-talk/motherese. Calling of the above animals consist of repeating their nicknames infinitely— *tutututu…, mimimimi…, kukukuku…* .

4.1.11 Question word reduplication

Question words such as *kʰi* 'what, *kʰipa* 'who', *kəci* 'which', *kəli* 'where' can be reduplicated into *kʰikʰi, kʰipakʰipa, kəcikəci, kəlikəli*. The suffix *-meimei* can also be attached to these question words. Reduplication of these question words function to denote plurality, variety, distribution or diversity. The attachment of -*meimei* suffix to these question words adds the meaning of plurality of the question word. Consider the examples (18) to (22) given below.

(18) *kʰi~kʰi* *sa-kʰəvai* *lei-kʰələ*
what~what do-to.do have-INT
'What things are there to be done?'

(19) *kʰipa~kʰipa* ra-rə́
who~who come-INT
'Who(pl.) are coming?'

(20) *kəci~kəci* kʰuipʰuŋ kəci
which~which bring INT
'Which things are to be brought?'

(21) *kəli~kəli* lei-li-kʰələ
where~where have-PRG-INT
'Where(pl.) are they?'

(22) *kʰi-mei~mei* *zəŋ-rə́*
what-pl.suf go.in-INT
'What things will be involved?'

4.2 Partial reduplication

As opposed to full reduplication, partial reduplication duplicates only a part of a word. Partial reduplication is found only with polysyllabic words in Tangkhul and it involves exclusively the doubling of the final syllable of the polysyllabic word (the syllables in the initial or middle of a polysyllabic word are never found to be duplicated). Again, partial reduplication can be found

with the major word classes (verb, adjective, adverb). Partial reduplication is often local in that the base and reduplicant are always adjacent to each other and no particles can separate or come between them. Partial reduplication in the following discussion is described under verb, adjective, adverb and number reduplication.

4.2.1 Verb reduplication

As with full reduplication of verbs, there are many ways of forming partial reduplication of verbs. Firstly, the nominalized verb undergoes reduplication where the verbal base alone is duplicated while the nominalizer remains the same. This can also be termed as prefixal reduplication. Next, in compound verbs, there are three forms: compounds can be reduplicated. By affixing the nominalizer between V1 and V2 and duplicating only the V2, by simply duplicating only the V2 and by suffixing the compound with intensifying suffixes and duplicating only the intensifying suffixes while V1 and V2 remain the same. These are shown in table 6 below. The above reduplication processes have the function of showing plurality, intensity and frequency.

NMZ+V~V	**V1+NMZ+V2~V2**	**V1+V2~V2**	**V1+V2+int.suf~int.suf**
ka+po~po ‘to ask for’ (plurality)	sa+kʰə+ŋai~ŋai ‘want to do’ (plurality)	niŋ+ʃi~ʃi ‘to thank’ (intensity)	ʃai+ ŋai+reo~reo ‘want to eat’ (intensity)
kʰə+mi~mi ‘to give’ (plurality)	məluŋ+kʰə+vat~vat ‘angry’ (plurality)	kəziŋ+ro~ro ‘to rain’ (frequency)	pʰa+rék+sek~sek ’to feign goodness’ (intensity)

Table 6*: Partial reduplication of verb*

4.2.2 Adjective reduplication

Partial reduplication of nominal modifiers is seen in relative states such as quality, colour, taste, measurement, etc. The adjectival bases are always preceded by the nominalizing prefix *kə-~kʰə-* to the left where only the adjectival base is duplicated. This is another instance of prefixal reduplication. In adjectives which are already attached with formative prefixes *mə- and ŋə-, kə-~kʰə-* is further prefixed to the combination while undergoing reduplication. Therefore the partial adjective reduplication must always begin with *kə-~kʰə-,* except in the case of *a-*+adjectival base~adjectival base, where *kə-~kʰə-* need not be attached (for example, *aʃəmʃəm* ‘old edible things’, *acoco* ‘empty’ (pl.)).

Quality	kətʰərtʰər ‘new’ (pl.)	kəsarsar ‘old (of age)’ (pl.)	kʰəŋənuinui ‘young’ (pl.)	kəcəmcəm ‘old’ (of things) (pl.)
Taste	kəʃimʃim ‘sweet’ (pl.)	kətʰurtʰur ‘sour (pl.)’	kəkʰakʰa ‘bitter (pl.)’	kəsasa ‘hot’ (pl.)

Colour	kəcərcər 'white' (pl.)	kəzikzik black (pl.)'	kəhuŋhuŋ 'red (pl.)'	kʰəmətektek 'green (pl.)'
Measurement	kəhəkhək 'big' (pl.)	kəsaŋsaŋ 'long' (pl.)	kəcuicui 'tall' (pl.)	kʰənemnem 'short height' (pl.)
Temperature	kəsasa 'hot (pl.)'	kəsiksik 'cold (of body) (pl.)'	kʰəlumlum 'warm (pl.)'	kʰəməkuikui 'cold (pl.)'
Speed/Time	kətʰaktʰak 'quick' (pl.)	kʰərere 'earlier' (pl.)	kətəptəp 'slow' (pl.)	kʰənaonao 'latter' (pl.)
Attribute	kəpaipai 'easy ones' (pl.)	kəsəksək 'difficult' (pl.)	kəʃiŋʃiŋ 'wise' (pl.)	aʃəmʃəm 'old food' (pl.)

***Table** 7: Partial reduplication of adjectives*

The process of adjectival reduplication in Tangkhul performs the function of adding plurality to the describing nouns. Regarding terms concerning measurement, reduplication performs the dual function of adding plurality as well as accentuating the feature of nouns by raising the tone of the adjectival bases and reduplicants. For example, in reduplication of the adjectival bases *hək* 'big' and *teo* 'small' with reference to the noun *ʃim* 'house', a mid tone of the reduplicated vowels indicates a plural interpretation— *ʃim kəhəkhək* 'big houses', *ʃim kəteoteo* 'small houses', whereas a high tone adds a feature of intensity to the plural interpretation— *ʃim kəhə́khə́k* 'very big houses', *ʃim kətéotéo* 'very small houses'.

There are some adjective intensifying suffixes that are reduplicable. They also, like other intensifying suffixes, enhance the property of the base they attach to, in this case the adjective. Reduplication of adjective intensifying suffixes that attach to bare stems and prefixes stems are shown in table 9 and table 10.

Base	Gloss	Base+intensifying suffix	Gloss	Reduplicated form	Gloss
pui	'full'	puitiŋ	'very full'	puitiŋtiŋ	'extremely full'
ʃa	'thick'	ʃator	'very thick'	ʃatortor	'extremely thick'
kao	'thin'	kaotʰek	'very thin'	kaotʰektʰek	'extremely thin'
hiŋ	'shiny'	hiŋpit	'very shiny'	hiŋpitpit	'extremely shiny'

***Table 9**: Partial reduplication of adjective intensifying suffixes with bare adjectives*

Adjective	A+intensifying suffix	Reduplicated form
mətʰiŋ ‘clear’	mətʰiŋrik ‘very clear’	mətʰiŋrikrik ‘extremely clear’
mənui ‘sticky’	mənuiʃap ‘very sticky'	mənuiʃapʃap ‘extremely sticky’
ŋəva ‘thin layer’	ŋəvater ‘very thin layer’	ŋəvaterter ‘extreme thin layer’
ŋəco ‘loose’	ŋəcokoŋ ‘very loose’	ŋəcokoŋkoŋ ‘extremely loose’

***Table 10**: Partial reduplication of adjective intensifying suffixes; formative prefixes mə- and ŋə*

Depending on the context, however, these reduplicated adjectives may have multiple interpretations. In (23) below, the reduplication of *kaotʰektʰek* has the meaning of conveying habituality in addition to plurality and intensity. Therefore, it can be said that reduplication of adjectives has various semantic functions— of pluralization of the modified noun, of adding intensity, of distributing the character or the quality of the adjective over more than one entity which specifies the number of the noun and of indicating habituality.

(23) *aton-ʃi rəm-nao-wə kao-tʰek~tʰek-hai-jə (habituality, plurality, intensity)*
aton-POS village-child-FOC thin-int.suf.~int.suf.-PRF-IND
‘The people from Aton's village are thin/skinny.’

4.2.3 Adverb reduplication

Adverbs as modifiers of verbs has already been discussed in §4.1.5 where some adverbs could be both fully and partially reduplicated. This seems to be another occurance of total reduplication being the diachronic source of partial reduplication (mentioned in §4.1.4).

There are some verb intensifying suffixes that are added to verbs and that perform the function of showing the manner of the verb. These intensifying suffixes are reduplicable and are added at the end of the verb. This reduplication performs the function of intensifying the manner of the verb. See table 11 below.

Verbal base	Gloss	Verb intensifying suffix	Reduplicated word	Gloss
mənɯ	‘to laugh’	-rim	mənɯ+rim~rim	‘laugh/smile heartily’
ʃaiŋai	‘to have appetite to eat’	-reo	ʃaiŋai+reo~reo	‘with great appetite’
pi	to sleep’	-pʰup	pi+pʰup~pʰup	‘fast asleep’

***Table 11**: Partial reduplication of verb intensifying suffixes*

4.2.4 Numeral reduplication

These are the modifiers of quantifiers. Here, the numeral base is reduplicated while the formative prefixes remain intact without undergoing duplication. Only the final syllable which is the

numeral base is repeated, observe table 12 below. *avɯvɯ* is a specialised case that exists only in reduplicated form (*avɯ* is not a word). Number reduplication performs the function of specifying the distribution of quantity (for eg. one by one/one each, two by two/two each). An example sentence is given in (24).

Base word	Gloss	Reduplicated word	Gloss
akʰə	one'	avɯvɯ	'one by one, one each'
kʰəni	'two'	kʰənini	'two by two, two each'
kʰətʰum	'three'	kʰətʰumtʰum	'three by three, three each'
məti	four'	mətiti	'four by four, four each'

Table 12: *Partial reduplication of numerals*

(24) *mi avɯ~vɯ-li kʰə-ni~ni mi-lu (distributionality)*
person fx-one~one-ACC fx-two~two give-PIMP
'Give two each to every person.'

5. Conclusion

Reduplication is one prominent feature in Tangkhul language as there are many forms of reduplication, both full and partial, interspersed throughout its vocabulary. We have used Morphological Doubling Theory (MDT) that focuses on morphological analysis to examine reduplication in this language. From the above study, it is observed that the grammatical class of noun, pronoun, verb, adjective and adverb, and some categories such as expressives, personal name, motherese, numeral system, onomatopoeia and question words are fully reduplicable; while the class of verb, adjective, adverb and numeral system are also partially reduplicable. Reduplication applies to content words, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs; and some function words such as pronouns and question tags. Full verb reduplication and partial adjective reduplication are found to be the most productive above all reduplication. The number of function word reduplication is limited and can be estimated. However, noun reduplication is only fully reduplicable and few monosyllabic nominals can be reduplicated.

The formative prefixes can be added to the class of verb, adjective, adverb in full reduplication and verb, adjective, adverb and numeral in partial reduplication. Prefixes are reduplicated along with their bases in full reduplication while only the bases are duplicated in partial reduplication. Bases are often monosyllabic in the language. In case of full reduplication of compounds the whole component is reduplicated while in partial reduplication of compounds only the final syllable, which is often the second component, is reduplicated. Reduplication of intensifying suffixes can be termed suffixal reduplication in Tangkhul. These suffixes are attached at the end of the word for reduplication, which branches to the right side of the word. Reduplication in Tangkhul is repeated only once, not multiple, except in onomatopoeic reduplication where it can be reduplicated infinitely. Most cases of reduplication are local, that is, the reduplicants are adjacent to the part of the base from which they draw their segmental

substance. In Tangkhul reduplication, the reduplicant most often copies the entire base exactly morphologically as well as phonologically.

Reduplication in Tangkhul does not change the word class. Forming of new words through reduplication is not possible in grammatical reduplication (noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb), numeral system or question tags. They can be termed inflectional reduplication. Reduplication of expressives, onomatopoeia and motherese produce new lexical items after reduplication. These can be termed derivational reduplication. However, it is difficult to sort the case of personal name reduplication into either inflectional or derivational. This condition is shared in Inkelas (2013), "Any survey that attempts to sort morphological constructions into the categories of derivation and inflection will inevitably contain a discussion of constructions that don't neatly fit into either category.

We found that Tangkhul relies on reduplication to achieve several semantic functions. Among them plurality appears to be the most common. They are found in full reduplication of noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, numeral, question tag and partial reduplication of verb and adjective. In most cases, the categories discussed in this study undergo reduplication to convey more than one semantic function. It is also possible for a reduplication to convey multiple interpretations. Intensification, distribution and iteration/repetition are some other commonly occurring functions of reduplication. Reduplication also functions to show distribution, reflexivity, reciprocalness, frequency, habituality, continuity, approximation, diversification, collectivity, entirety, abundance, augmentation or exaggeration, simplification, variety, synchronization, simultaneity and accentuation in this language. It can be said that the semantics of reduplicated words get extended through reduplication in Tangkhul as no meaning ever remains the same after reduplication. In most of these cases, reduplication in the language is iconic since the repetition of morphological materials is associated with the semantic concept of "more". Some of the above functions will be hard to achieve without reduplication.

Abbreviations

A	adjective
ACC	accusative
AGT	agentive
ASP	aspect
DEM	demonstrative
fx	formative prefix
FUT	future
IMP	imperative
IND	indefinite
INT	interrogative
int.suf	intensifying suffix
MAN	manner
NMZ	nominalizer
PIMP	polite imperative
pl.	plural
POSS	possibility
REP	reciprocal
suf	suffix
T.B.	Tibeto-Burman

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Equitable Access for Tribal Children at Early Childhood Care and Education: Practice and Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

Tribal languages are not just a means of communication, but seen as living embodiments of cultural identity, their knowledge system, and traditional wisdom. For achieving the vision of NEP 2020, regardless of the circumstances of birth or background, equitable access to each child has to be ensured. Self-efficacy plays a significant role in academic participation of tribal students. Curricula, teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation should be guided by the principle of Self-efficacy belief. Quality resources in tribal languages is a precondition for their quality education. Translation can enable inclusion, access; beyond preservation. Translation of tribal folktales may be an effective method to provide that equitable access which is missing in the education system. Self-determination of tribal peoples when secured, ensures dignity and thus protects their right to education. Tribal children should be protected from forced assimilation. Community participation in the process of education can protect their cultural rights, and educational rights.

Introduction

There are approximately 370 million indigenous people in some 90 countries throughout all regions of the world. Indigenous people have historically been among the poorest and most excluded and disadvantaged sectors of society. A major factor contributing to the disadvantaged position of indigenous peoples is the lack of quality education…Quality education may be defined as an education that is well resourced, culturally sensitive, respectful of heritage and that takes into account cultural security and integrity, encompasses community and individual development, and designed in a way that is implementable….It is a precondition for indigenous peoples' ability to realize their right to self-determination, including their right to pursue their own economic, social and cultural development.

Language Matters in Tribal Education

Understanding the importance of implementing peoples' right to education, it has been announced that: "A 100 percent literate India is of paramount importance for realizing the vision for the country in 2020" Numerous steps were taken for ensuring hundred percent enrolment and retention of all children in the 6 to 14 years group, yet only 41.9 percent tribal children enroll in class VIII. That means in spite of 'No Detention Policy' up to standard VIII, 58.1 percent tribal students discontinue studies. This is very alarming.

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Language is one of the most important factors. According to Vygotsky (1978) language begins as pre-intellectual speech and gradually develops into a sophisticated form of inner speech; one of the main forces responsible for cognitive development. The tribal children can neither use their language nor can use instructional language to assimilate new concepts and experiences with their existing schema. As a result, not only their language acquisition is affected but also their cognitive development is stunted. Most of them use dialects instead of language and the dialect also changes with the change of geographical locations.

Language is not only a tool for communication and knowledge acquisition but also a fundamental attribute of cultural identity and empowerment both for individuals and the group. "Education for the indigenous peoples and nomadic peoples should be linguistically and culturally appropriate to their needs and should facilitate access to further education and training" Intercultural bilingual education can promote cross-cultural understanding and integrate different languages and systems of learning and teaching. The indigenous people believe that intercultural bilingual education best reflects their educational goal and values. UNESCO also supports intercultural education as a means of promoting respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, encouraging understanding between different population groups and eliminating discrimination.

The National Education Policy (NEP) at last brings a ray of hope; particularly the importance given in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) from three years can solve many issues of tribal education if implemented systematically following the principles of learning and development.

NEP 2020 articulates a clear goal – that every child in the age range of 3-8 years must have access to free, safe, high quality, developmentally appropriate ECCE by the year 2025…. Regardless of the circumstances of birth or background, quality ECCE enables children to participate and flourish in the educational system throughout their lives. ECCE is thus perhaps one of the greatest and most powerful equalizers.

Language specialists predict that up to 90 percent of the world's language (of the 7000 languages in the world today, more than 4000 are spoken by indigenous peoples) are likely to become extinct or threatened by the end of the century. When established languages are gradually becoming irrelevant in this age of Globalization, establishing new scripts for diverse tribal communities is not very easy. But the National Curriculum Framework for Foundation Stage 2022 recommends home language for ECCE. The official mother tongue of any state invariably differs from the home languages of tribal students. And one of the weakest links in our education system is the failure to integrate community and culture in the process of education, from curriculum construction to implementation and from pedagogy to evaluation.

Therefore, it is not very easy to ensure equitable education for the tribal children. But to achieve the Vision of NEP 2020, we have to overcome all the challenges. These are some of the feasible ways by which we may bring significant changes in early childhood education of the tribal children —

Participation of indigenous elders as holders of traditional knowledge and speakers in indigenous language can be facilitated through intergenerational learning programmes in formal as well as informal educational settings. Community based learning initiatives may be effective. Empowering through orientation the tribal communities may be encouraged to take control of their educational endeavors.

Translation of Folktales of tribal Languages in official state languages as well as Hindi may be a great initiative. Folktales are more than just stories; they are vital cultural artifacts and repositories of knowledge that entertain, educate, and connect people across generations, playing a significant role in shaping individual and collective identities. It expresses their worldview, agricultural practices, kinship patterns, ecological wisdom etc. Teaching tribal students through their stories in a formal structure is essential. It was a great initiative of School of Languages and Linguistics (SLL), Jadavpur University to organise a workshop on 'Material Preparation on Folktales of Tribal Languages of West Bengal' in collaboration with Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL). Throughout the country, such types of initiatives have to be taken to generate as many materials as possible. Once it has been done adequately, the second stage is to integrate the content in the ECCE programme. NCERT already developed the curriculum for ECCE. It is the duty of SCERTs to integrate the cultural contents at the local level.

Self-efficacy is individuals' faith in their own abilities; a feeling of competency, which influences thinking and feeling and contributes significantly to human motivation and attainment (Bandura 1997). One of the main causes of tribal dropout in India may be the lack of self-efficacy because people always strive to exercise control over events that affect their lives. When the tribal students fail to cope up with the environmental demands in the schools, they tend to focus on their inefficacy and exaggerate potential difficulties (Bandura 1981). Instead of a universal approach to curriculum, the curriculum has to be flexible enough to incorporate all the areas where the tribal students have high efficacy beliefs. They often show their exceptional efficiency in different domains where they have high efficacy beliefs. To hit a flying and moving object, one needs tremendous control over his motor and sense organs. Their creativity is often seen in their art, craft, music, folk-song, folk-dance. The weapon they make with simple natural objects, the beautiful tunes of the musical instruments they invent, the knowledge of the medicinal value of the plants, all prove their scientific bent of mind. Tribal education should adopt a holistic culturally relevant approach that centers indigenous ways of knowing, their languages and the active involvement of their communities.

Indigenous knowledge systems have to be embedded with their curriculum. Combining traditional practices and knowledge with curriculum subjects in a contextual way strengthens the link between community and school. Structuring physical learning space is important. Classrooms might be moved to a field or forest and taking into account a community's cosmological and social order, learning space could be structured. This is called Land-based pedagogy, learning that incorporates the land and nature into outdoor experiences.

Assessment and evaluation can play a significant role in developing the efficacy belief of the learners. In indigenous education, assessment and evaluation are guided by the objective of enabling and empowering students to become culturally grounded and knowledgeable participants and actors in their own communities as well as in the national and global society.

Anganwadi teachers should be trained by culturally competent educators to teach the tribal children at the initial stage. Tribal teacher education programmes have to be designed to increase the number of qualified tribal teachers.

Successful implementation of NEP 2020 can solve the problem of tribal education because the policy reflects the successful model of indigenous education. For example, the story of India, 'the world's largest democracy' once resembles the story of the USA, 'the world's oldest democracy'. There are 573 scheduled tribes (ST) in India consisting 8.6 percent of present population. According to the United States' Federal Register, the official list of tribes is 567 till July, 2015. 3.7 million people have been identified as American Indians and Alaska Natives and an additional 5.9 million identified as in combination with one or more races. In India where only 13.9 percent tribal students pass Higher Secondary, in the USA according to the Census report the rate of high school graduates among the American Indians and Alaska Natives is 77 percent. They are successful because of the change brought in the approach of tribal education.

While the previous assimilationist model focuses on integrating American Indians into dominant culture (Berry, 1980) by following a deficiency explanation (American Indian students are not successful because of their cultural and language differences), Charleston's (1994) model of 'true' Native education; Epstein's (1995) model of overlapping spheres, proposes bringing Indian communities, families and culture together in educational process.

After 1876, off reservation industrial boarding schools were established to solve the 'Indian Problems' by moving Indian youth as far as possible from the 'savage' influence of their parents and communities (Deyhle and Swisher, 1997; Szasz 1999). Participation of indigenous students in higher education was considerably very low for the last four centuries as European Americans have attempted to remold indigenous people into their image through educational institutions (Chadwick, 1972). But the expectation of American Indian communities was 'intellectually demanding schools that are culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate to their individual and tribal identity' (Charleston 1994, p.47). 'No Child Left Behind Act' (2002) and 'Every Child Succeeds Act' (2015) brought significant change in American tribal education.

Following NEP 2020, NCFs also reflect the fundamental right to learn in our own language, especially in the early years of schooling. NCERT has already started to publish text books in 22 scheduled languages. Learning through mother tongue is considered essential for improving learning outcomes, comprehension, and socio-emotional development. Even in NCF for Foundational Stage 2022 emphasizes on learning through first home language/mother tongue then official state language. R1 preferably be the Language most familiar to the students.

For the tribal students the most familiar language is their own language. Therefore, it is the duty of the state to provide the learning environment for the tribal students in their mother tongue at least at the ECCE stage. If a tribal student is not familiar with the official state language, for her/him R1 is his or her mother tongue and R2 is the State language. The quality learning outcome is going to be evaluated through attaining foundational literacy and numeracy. Translation enables inclusion, access; beyond preservation and we can start with translating the folktales of tribal communities. Folktales serve several purposes- for cultural transmission, moral education, entertainment, social cohesion, historical understanding, language development, emotional development and for exploration of universal themes. Translation of tribal folktales ensures dignity by giving signals that you matter, your voice matters, your stories matter and the world is keen to hear you, your stories and your community practices. Without dignity, no right

can be protected. To protect the educational rights of tribal children, the first and foremost thing is to ensure culturally and linguistically pertinent curricula which should recognize, respect, and promote tribal histories, values, languages, oral traditions, spiritualities, and their life perspectives.

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Inclusive Excellence: Promoting Linguistic Diversity through Effective English Instruction in Multilingual Educational Contexts

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A B S T R A C T

This paper investigates the role of English in multilingual classrooms, addressing both the challenges and opportunities inherent in such linguistically diverse settings. As a global lingua franca, English often interacts with regional and indigenous languages, creating complex dynamics that require careful navigation to optimize educational outcomes while preserving linguistic diversity. The study underscores the cognitive and cultural advantages of multilingual education, such as enhanced problem-solving skills, cultural sensitivity, and global competence. However, it also identifies significant challenges, including resource constraints, students' diverse language proficiencies, and the potential marginalization of non-dominant languages. These issues underscore the need for balanced strategies that position English as a complement rather than a replacement to other languages within educational frameworks. To address these challenges, the paper proposes evidence-based strategies, including culturally responsive pedagogy that integrates students' linguistic and cultural identities, differentiated instruction tailored to varying proficiency levels, and the use of technology to enhance language acquisition. The importance of ongoing professional development for educators is highlighted as essential for equipping teachers with the skills to effectively manage multilingual classrooms. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the critical role of supportive educational policies and active community engagement in fostering inclusive and equitable learning environments. By advocating for an approach that harmonizes English instruction with the preservation of linguistic diversity, this paper contributes to the broader discourse on equitable education in multilingual contexts. It aims to advance academic success, promote intercultural understanding, and uphold the value of linguistic plurality in an interconnected global society.

Introduction

This research paper aims to explore the impact of English in multilingual classrooms, examining the challenges and opportunities it presents for educators. Coexisting with other languages requires a comprehensive understanding of dynamics and strategic approaches for optimal outcomes. By delving into complexities and advantages of a multilingual approach, educators can leverage English to enrich learning experiences. English's prominence in international communication, business, and technology underscores its significance in multilingual classrooms, necessitating nuanced strategies to benefit all students maximally.

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A comprehensive examination of the impact of English in multilingual classrooms requires consideration of linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical perspectives. Understanding these complexities unveils the potential benefits of a multilingual educational environment. Strategies for optimal results should be tailored to the diverse student population, incorporating innovative teaching methods, targeted language support, and a culturally inclusive atmosphere. By exploring these strategies, educators can leverage English to create enriching learning experiences that cater to students' unique linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

English as a Global Language: A Catalyst for Connectivity and Opportunity

English has risen to global prominence as a result of the cultural, economic, and political influence of English-speaking countries. Its status as a global language has significant implications for international communication, trade, and education. In the modern world, English proficiency is often considered a key factor in accessing higher education, career opportunities, and participation in the global economy. (Low, 2020) The dominance of English is a manifestation of its widespread use in various spheres of life, including international organizations, business, science, and technology. (Xue & Zuo, 2013).

The widespread use of English as a second language has heightened its importance in international business and diplomacy. Non-native speakers recognize the necessity of English proficiency for global competitiveness, driving demand for language instruction and assessment. In academia, English serves as the lingua franca for scholarly communication, facilitating collaboration and broader dissemination of research. English's dominance shapes international communication, cultural exchange, and knowledge dissemination, influencing various domains like science, technology, and entertainment. This solidifies its role as a primary language for global interaction, enhancing our interconnected world.

English proficiency not only opens doors to better educational and career opportunities, but it also promotes cross-cultural understanding and collaboration. As individuals strive to master the language, they gain access to a wealth of literature, media, and academic resources that are predominantly available in English. This exposure enhances their ability to engage with diverse perspectives and ideas from different parts of the world. Moreover, the widespread use of English as a medium for international conferences, negotiations, and diplomatic relations underscores its indispensable role in shaping global policies and international affairs. The ability to communicate effectively in English becomes a strategic asset for nations, organizations, and individuals seeking to exert influence and participate in the global arena. (Islam, 2023) The influence of English extends beyond mere linguistic proficiency; it embodies a gateway to interconnectedness and opportunity in an increasingly interconnected world. As the language continues to evolve and adapt to the changing dynamics of global society, its importance as a catalyst for collaboration and engagement across borders becomes ever more pronounced. (Avdeev, 2021)

The Transformative Power of Multilingual Education

Multilingual education constitutes a critical element in fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment. It affords students the opportunity to attain proficiency in multiple languages, thereby enhancing their cognitive capabilities and equipping them for a globalized world where multilingualism holds substantial value. Empirical research indicates that multilingual education can result in improved academic performance, cognitive flexibility, and heightened cultural awareness. By integrating multiple languages into educational settings,

students are enabled to develop a more profound understanding of diverse cultures and perspectives, which in turn promotes a more tolerant and interconnected society. (Bialystok, 2016)

Multilingual education is associated with enhanced employment prospects and economic opportunities, given that proficiency in multiple languages is highly valued in the global job market. Therefore, the implementation and support of multilingual education programs are vital for promoting diversity, equity, and intercultural understanding within educational institutions globally. (Hornberger, 2009) Multilingual education recognizes and embraces students' diverse linguistic backgrounds, fostering inclusivity and support in learning environments. Its benefits extend beyond classrooms, impacting individuals, communities, and societies by promoting cross-cultural communication and understanding. It also preserves and celebrates linguistic heritage and cultural identity, essential in our interconnected world.

In this comprehensive overview, I will examine the multifaceted aspects of multilingual education, highlighting its significance in today's globalized society and its impact on individuals and communities. The analysis will include an evaluation of successful multilingual education programs and their outcomes, as well as an exploration of the challenges and opportunities inherent in implementing such programs. Through this exploration, the aim is to provide valuable insights into the critical importance of multilingual education and its potential to foster a more inclusive, equitable, and interconnected world.

Benefits of Multilingualism

Multilingualism offers a wide array of benefits for students that extend far beyond just the ability to communicate in multiple languages. Research has shown that being multilingual can actually enhance cognitive skills such as problem-solving, multitasking, and decision-making. (Bak & Mehmedbegović, 2017). Additionally, it has been found that multilingual individuals have a greater ability to empathize with and understand diverse perspectives and as students continue to navigate a rapidly globalizing world, the benefits of multilingualism extend far beyond simple communication. Research has shown that multilingual individuals often possess cognitive advantages, such as better problem-solving skills, improved multitasking abilities, and enhanced creativity. (Diamond, 2010, p.332) Being proficient in multiple languages can indeed unlock a plethora of professional opportunities in an interconnected world, granting students a competitive advantage in the job market. Furthermore, multilingualism cultivates empathy, tolerance, and an appreciation for diverse cultures, thereby equipping students with the essential skills to excel in an increasingly diverse society. As educators and parents, it is imperative to acknowledge and advocate for the invaluable advantages of multilingualism, recognizing its significance not only for academic achievement but also for personal and professional development. Moreover, the cognitive benefits of multilingualism extend beyond problem-solving and multitasking, enriching individuals' cognitive abilities in various ways. Studies have shown that multilingual individuals also have improved memory, as they constantly switch between languages, which exercises their brains and keeps them sharp. (Marián & Shook, 2012, p.13)

Indeed, learning multiple languages has been correlated with a delay in the onset of age-related cognitive resilience and a lower likelihood of developing dementia in later years. Beyond cognitive advantages, multilingualism also fosters enhanced social and emotional skills. Multilingual individuals frequently exhibit greater cultural awareness and sensitivity, facilitating the building of relationships and effective communication in diverse settings. This attribute is

particularly valuable in today's interconnected world, where cross-cultural communication is increasingly essential for fostering cooperation and understanding across borders.
Multilingualism offers substantial professional advantages, particularly in global industries where individuals with language skills are in high demand. They can connect with a broader range of clients and partners and bring unique perspectives and problem-solving approaches. Educators and parents should promote multilingualism as a valuable skill that extends beyond language proficiency. Encouraging students to engage with languages and diverse cultures enhances their academic and professional prospects while fostering personal growth and global understanding.

Navigating Challenges and Opportunities in Multilingual Education

Utilizing multiple languages in education fosters linguistic and cultural diversity while ensuring fair and inclusive learning opportunities. However, challenges include scarce resources in all languages, a shortage of qualified multilingual teachers, and resistance from communities fearing the dilution of a dominant language or culture. Additionally, well-defined language policies and strategic planning are necessary to ensure equal status for all languages, addressing issues like the language of instruction, curriculum development, and assessment methods. Multilingual education also faces social and political challenges, requiring a careful approach to respect linguistic rights. The challenges must be meticulously addressed to create an inclusive and effective education system. Support for multilingual education should include adequate resources, qualified teachers, clear language policies, and a nuanced understanding of the social and political dynamics surrounding language and education. Additionally, it is crucial to consider the unique needs of each linguistic community to ensure that all languages are given equal opportunities for development and growth within the educational framework. (Barwell et al., 2019)

One way to address the challenges of multilingual education is by cultivating teaching practices that are culturally responsive and inclusive. This involves incorporating diverse linguistic and cultural perspectives into the curriculum, as well as providing professional development opportunities for teachers to effectively support students from various linguistic backgrounds. (Gay, 2002) As highlighted in the sources, researchers have proposed strategies such as building on students' cultural and linguistic assets, using multimodal approaches to literacy instruction, and collaborating with diverse communities to create more inclusive education. (Schön et al., 2008; Ntelioglou et al., 2014). These approaches have the potential to create a more equitable and inclusive education system that celebrates linguistic diversity. (Lwanga-Lumu, 2020)

Fostering a supportive and inclusive school environment is essential for the success of multilingual education. This involves promoting positive attitudes towards linguistic diversity, celebrating different languages and cultures, and creating spaces where students feel valued and respected for their linguistic identities. By cultivating such an environment, educational institutions can enhance the effectiveness of multilingual education and contribute to the overall well-being and academic success of students. (Ntelioglou et al., 2014)

In addressing the social and political challenges, collaboration with diverse stakeholders such as community leaders, policymakers, and language advocates is crucial. Engaging in open and transparent dialogues can help build consensus and support for multilingual education initiatives, while also ensuring that the linguistic rights of all individuals are upheld. (Haren, 2010) Successful implementation of multilingual education requires a comprehensive and

holistic approach that takes into consideration the linguistic, cultural, social, and political complexities involved. By working collaboratively and proactively addressing the challenges, it is possible to create an inclusive and effective multilingual education system that truly embraces and nurtures linguistic diversity.

Going Beyond Communication to Cognitive and Professional Gains

Teaching English in multilingual classrooms poses challenges like varying language proficiency and promoting equal participation. Educators must manage classroom dynamics and consider cultural differences, fostering inclusivity and respect. Additionally, limited access to resources and support systems for multilingual education, including instructional materials and professional development, is a hurdle. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach, encompassing language instruction, cultural competency, inclusive pedagogy, and collaboration with families and communities. (Dean, 2001)

These challenges can be effectively addressed if teachers continuously seek out professional development opportunities, engage in ongoing reflection and self-assessment, and collaborate with colleagues to share best practices. By doing so, educators can cultivate a learning environment that celebrates diversity, promotes equity, and empowers all students to thrive in their language development and academic pursuits. (Banks et al., 2001) To address the issue of limited access to resources, educators can explore the use of digital platforms that offer interactive and customized learning materials for multilingual classrooms. For example, apps like Duolingo and Rosetta Stone provide language learning resources tailored to individual proficiency levels. (Melkonyan & Matevosyan, 2020)

Teachers can benefit from participating in workshops and training sessions focused on multilingual education. Organizations such as TESOL International Association offer certification programs and resources specifically designed to support educators in teaching English to speakers of other languages. In addition to exploring digital platforms such as Duolingo and Rosetta Stone, educators can also consider implementing a variety of specialized instructional materials and strategies within their classrooms. This may include utilizing bilingual books, visual aids, and interactive language games to cater to diverse language proficiency levels. (Tuma et al., 2021) Furthermore, implementing differentiated instruction techniques and peer collaboration activities can help create a more inclusive learning environment that meets the varied needs of multilingual learners.

Participating in workshops and training on multilingual education is essential. Teachers should also seek mentorship and peer learning within their educational community for valuable insights and strategies. Building a support network with fellow educators, along with ongoing professional development in cultural competency, inclusive pedagogy, and language support, equips teachers to create inclusive and effective learning environments for all students.

Recognizing the importance of family and community involvement is crucial in addressing the challenges of multilingual classrooms. Encouraging open communication with families and community members, and seeking their input on the educational needs of multilingual students, can greatly contribute to the development of a supportive and inclusive learning environment. (Rodríguez-Valls et al., 2014) By fostering strong partnerships with families and communities, educators can gain valuable cultural insights and support, ultimately enhancing the overall educational experience for multilingual learners.

To create an inclusive curriculum, educators can integrate culturally relevant materials and literature into English language teaching, representing diverse backgrounds and traditions.

This validates students' cultural identities and fosters belonging. Addressing challenges in multilingual classrooms requires specialized resources, professional development, inclusive pedagogy, and community collaboration, promoting a supportive and equitable learning environment.

Effective Instructional Approaches to Enhance English Language Learning

In order to ensure effective English language instruction, it is important to incorporate various strategies that cater to different learning styles and abilities. According to research by Echevarria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D., one beneficial strategy is to use visual aids such as charts, diagrams, and pictures to support language learning. (Short et al., 2011) Visual support can help students better comprehend new vocabulary and grammatical concepts. Another effective approach, as suggested by Graham, S., & Perin, D., is to provide opportunities for students to engage in meaningful writing activities. (Wiyati & Marlina, 2021) This can help learners develop their writing skills and express themselves in English more effectively.

Integrating diverse strategies into English instruction creates a supportive environment for English language learners (ELLs). Understanding individual learning styles and needs is crucial for effective language acquisition. Incorporating visual, kinesthetic, and auditory elements—such as hands-on activities, role-playing, games, and music—engages students and reinforces language concepts. Using authentic and culturally relevant materials, like literature and media, enhances students' connection to the language, fostering meaningful learning experiences.

A focus on differentiated instruction, where content, processes, and products are tailored to suit the unique needs of each learner, can be particularly beneficial. This approach allows educators to provide varied learning experiences and assessments that accommodate different proficiency levels and learning paces. (Smale-Jacobse et al., 2019)

Tailoring Instruction for Diverse Learning Styles and Abilities

As our global community becomes increasingly diverse, the need for ongoing professional development for teachers to effectively support English Language Learners in multilingual classrooms cannot be overstated. This professional development is crucial in ensuring that teachers have the necessary skills, knowledge, and strategies to meet the diverse linguistic and cultural needs of their students.

A crucial component of continuous professional development for teachers is enhancing their comprehension of language acquisition and development. This encompasses grasping the stages of language learning, recognizing the impact of first language development on second language acquisition, and employing effective instructional strategies to support language development in multilingual classrooms. (Poudel, 2019)

Ongoing professional development for educators should focus on culturally responsive teaching strategies, understanding ELLs' cultural backgrounds, and integrating relevant content to enhance engagement. Training should also cover effective assessment and differentiation strategies, enabling teachers to accurately gauge language proficiency and content knowledge, and tailor instruction to meet diverse needs. By deepening their understanding of language acquisition, culturally responsive methods, and assessment practices, educators can create inclusive and supportive environments where ELLs thrive academically and linguistically.

The Importance of Comprehensive Support for Multilingual Education

Multilingual education requires a comprehensive approach to ensure the success of English language learners (ELLs). Educational policies should support language acquisition, culturally responsive teaching, and equitable resources for ELLs. Adequate funding is essential for bilingual programs, professional development, and multilingual educational materials, enabling schools to provide the necessary support for ELLs to thrive academically.

Community partnerships also play a vital role in supporting multilingual education. By collaborating with community organizations, schools can access additional resources and support systems for ELLs and their families. Community partnerships can also help bridge the cultural and linguistic gap between the school and the diverse communities it serves, fostering a more inclusive and supportive educational environment for ELLs. (Rodríguez-Valls et al., 2014)

Strategies for Inclusive and Effective English Language Instruction

When considering recommendations for enhancing English language instruction in multilingual classrooms, it is crucial to address the diverse needs of the students and create an inclusive learning environment. One approach is to incorporate culturally responsive teaching practices that acknowledge and celebrate the various languages and backgrounds of the students. This can help create a sense of belonging and validate the students' linguistic diversity. (Byrd, 2016) Additionally, providing opportunities for teachers' professional development to refine their skills in differentiated instruction, language acquisition strategies, and cross-cultural communication can be instrumental in supporting the unique needs of multilingual learners. Providing differentiated instruction that caters to the individual language proficiency levels of the students can be beneficial. This may involve small group activities, one-on-one support, or peer tutoring to address the varying needs within the classroom.

Integrating real-world applications of the English language through projects, discussions, and authentic literature can profoundly enhance language acquisition. By immersing students in genuine language use within meaningful contexts, educators can foster increased engagement and facilitate the development of language skills. Harnessing technology and multimedia resources can offer interactive and engaging opportunities for language practice and exposure. By leveraging digital platforms, educational apps, and multimedia materials, educators can supplement traditional instruction, accommodating various learning styles and preferences while providing dynamic avenues for language learning.

Conclusion

Promoting linguistic diversity through effective English instruction is vital for creating an inclusive educational environment. By embracing students' linguistic backgrounds, educators can support language development and foster a sense of belonging. Instruction should be responsive to multilingual students' needs and recognize the value of their linguistic diversity. This approach empowers students to achieve academic success while celebrating their diverse language abilities. Understanding students' unique language backgrounds allows educators to acknowledge their challenges and strengths, creating a more inclusive and supportive classroom.

Inclusive English instruction also involves utilizing culturally and linguistically responsive teaching strategies. This includes incorporating students' native languages and cultural experiences into the curriculum, as well as providing instructional materials that reflect the diverse linguistic backgrounds of the learners. (Byrd, 2016) Educators can adapt their

teaching methods to accommodate different learning styles and language proficiency levels, ensuring that all students have equal opportunities to succeed.

Promoting linguistic diversity in English instruction requires ongoing professional development for educators. Training on best practices for supporting multilingual learners, understanding language impacts on learning, and implementing effective English development strategies is essential. Continuous improvement in instructional approaches enables educators to better meet diverse linguistic needs and foster inclusive excellence in multilingual education.

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Nonverbal Predicate in Manipuri

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ABSTRACT

The present paper attempts to explore the construction of non-verbal predicates in Manipuri (Ethnologue ISO 639-2 mni) which is one of the Tibeto-Burman languages of Northeast India. It deals with how the non-verbal predicates are constructed and what role the copula is playing in it. The copula -ni is used to make a nominal predicate that shows identity, possession, purpose, benefaction, origin and also to make some adjectival predicates in the context of making something different from a collection. For sentences having non-verbal predicate and showing past and future time reference the verb oi 'be' is used. For past time reference the verb is used with the aspect marker -rəm and -gəni for future time reference. For making locative and existential predicate the existential verb ləi is used. This existential verb is also used to make another possessive predicate.

1. Introduction

Manipuri (Ethnologue ISO 639-3 mni) which is locally known as 'Meiteilon/Meeteilon' is the first language of the people in the valley of Manipur and the second language of those for whom Manipuri is not their mother tongue. The total population of Manipuri speakers is 17,61,079. It is one of the Tibeto-Burman languages of Southeast Asia, which has its own script and literature and is mainly spoken in Manipur, North-Eastern India. It is one of the Tibeto-Burman languages of the Sino-Tibetan family which is placed in the Kuki-Chin proper separately by Grierson (1904), and in the Meitei branch of the Kukish section by Shafer (1974). Bradley (1997:29) put Manipuri under the Kuki-Chin subgroup of Tibeto-Burman Languages. Meithei, the state language of Manipur, shows significant points of contact with Kachin as well as with Kuki-Naga, though its affinities are predominantly with the latter (Benedict 1972:10). It is also spoken in some other places of India like Assam, Tripura and in some countries such as Myanmar and Bangladesh. Manipuri is the only medium of communication among the speakers of the different tribal languages that mainly inhabit the hilly areas of Manipur. So, it is a lingua-franca of the state.

In August 1992 Manipuri became the first Tibeto-Burman language to receive recognition as a schedule (viii) official language of India (Bradley 1997:29). It is taught as a subject up to the post-graduate level in some universities of India, apart from being a medium of instruction up to the undergraduate level in Manipur. It is the official language of Manipur, which has a very old and rich literature with a variegated history, culture and tradition. Now Manipuri is the medium of instruction in all the levels of education while English is an alternate medium of instruction.

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2. Research Objectives

The present paper is primarily focusing on how the nonverbal predicates are constructed in Manipuri while making a sentence wherein there is no verbal form or element in the predicate. In some languages like English, the copula verb is used to make a nonverbal predicate which is syntactically a verbal predicate and in some other languages no copula verb is used in the sentences of nonverbal predicate. In case of Manipuri, copula is required to make such a nonverbal predicate. Predicate is an important part of a sentence and it is also very much related to the subject of the sentence. It is the essential constituent of a sentence that functions to say something or describe about the person or thing which is being referred to by the subject. While subject is one of the important parts of a sentence, the other part is the predicate which is said of, or predicated of, whatever the subject refers to (Matthews, 1981).

3. Theoretical background

After studying many works on copula construction of different languages, it comes to the realization that the sole role of copula is to make a relationship between the two important parts of a sentence i.e. subject and predicate. A copula construction marks a range of relation between the copula subject and the copula complement depending in large part on the nature of the copula complement (Dixon, 2010). There are three types of clauses with nonverbal predicates whose properties vary considerably across languages. These are adjectival predicates, nominal predicates, and locative predicates. In English, all three of these predicates occur with the copula verb be. (Dryer, 2007)

4. Copula

While constructing nonverbal predicates in Manipuri sentence making process the copula has played a vital role in making such a copulative sentence. In Manipuri copulative sentences, the copula functions as an affix suffixing to the nominal form of the predicate and sometimes as a lexical item. The Manipuri copula which is used only in present time reference is -ni after which nothing can be affixed. Its negative counterpart is *nətte*.

(1) tomba ojɨani [indicating present time reference]
Tomba teacher cop.sam
'Tomba is a teacher.'

(2) tomba ojɨa nə-te [indicating present time reference]
Tomba teacher cop-neg
'Tomba is not a teacher.'

The difference between sentence (1) and (2) regarding the aspects of the copula in the affirmative and negative sentences is that in (1) which is an affirmative sentence, the copula -ni is directly attaching to the nominal predicate while in (2) the negative counterpart nətte i.e. nə- with the negative marker -te is positioning as a particle. Here, the different appearances of the copula can be seen from the above two examples.

Another point which can be looked into is the form of the copula while it is used in sentences indicating past time reference. In making copulative sentences which are making reference to past time, another verb oi, meaning 'be' in English after which some inflectional suffixes can be added. And in the case of future time reference, the same verb is to be used. But the difference between these two is for past time reference the verb oi is to be suffixed with the

aspect markers like -rəm and -i whereas for future time reference the verb has to be suffixed with the aspect marker -gəni.

(3) məhak niŋt^{h}əu oi-rəm-i [indicating past time reference]
3sg king be-dur-sam
'He was a king.'

(4) məhak niŋt^{h}əu oi-rəm-de [indicating past time reference]
3sg king be-dur-neg
'He was not a king.'

(5) romes oɟa oi-gəni [indicating future time reference]
Romes teacher be-irr
'Romes will be a teacher.'

(6) romes oɟa oi-roi [indicating future time reference]
Romes teacher be-irr.neg
'Romes will not be a teacher.'

In example (3) the verb oi is followed by the durative marker being followed by the simple aspect marker. In the case of (4) the verb is followed by the same durative marker and then being followed by the negative marker -de. The verb is followed by the irrealis marker -gəni for affirmative future time reference in example (5) and in (6) the same verb oi is followed by the negative irrealis marker -roi for future time reference.

5. Nominal Predicate

A brief introduction on predicate has been given in the earlier part of the paper. What a predicate is all about the part of a sentence which states or predicates about the subject of the same sentence. A predicate has become a slot in which a nominal form can take place. If a nominal form occupies the slot of the predicate, that predicate must be called a nominal predicate. In Manipuri the nominal predicates are constructed with the help of the copula -ni which covers the relation of identity, possession, purpose, benefaction and origin.

5.1 Identity

The nominal predicate in Manipuri can be employed as a means of representing the identity of the subject of a sentence because telling something about the identity of the referent the subject refers to is the core function of the nominal predicate. A few examples on how the nominal predicates are used to show the identity of the referent the subject refers to are illustrated.

(7) kumar ləumi-ni
Kumar farmer-cop
'Kumar is a farmer.'

(8) nupiməca-siŋ-du məhəiroi-ni
girl-pl-dist student-cop
'The girls are students.'

(9) sam ŋami-ni
Sam fisherman-cop
'Sam is a fisherman.'

All the above three examples from (7) to (9) have nominal predicates followed by the copulative suffix -ni. In (7) the nominal predicate ləumi 'farmer' is identifying the person the subject kumar refers to and in the case of (8) the nominal predicate məhəiroi 'student' is

identifying the referent the subject nupiməca 'girl' refers to. The nominal predicate ŋami 'fisherman' in (9) functions to show the identity of the person the subject sam is referring to. All of these nominal predicates followed by the copulative suffix become the predicates which are representing the identity of their respective subjects.

5.2 Possession

Another function the nominal predicate is doing is to show one's possessiveness of something. It is formed by suffixing the possessive marker -ki~-gi and the copula -ni to the noun which is in the slot of the predicate respectively. Here the nominal predicate followed by the possessive marker -ki~-gi and copula -ni shows one's possessiveness of the possessed item. For a detailed discussion some instances are given.

(10) p^{h}urit-si gita-gi-ni
shirt-prox Gita-poss-cop
'This is Gita's shirt.'

(11) jum-du mohon-gi-ni
house-dist Mohon-poss-cop
'That is Mohon's house.'

(12) ka-du luk^{h}oi-gi-ni
room-dist Lukhoi-poss-cop
'That is Lukhoi's room.'

All the nominal predicates in the examples from (10) to (12) show the possessiveness of their respective possessed items by suffixing the possessive marker and copula to the noun which represents the possessor. One point to be noted here is that it is obligatory to use the possessive marker -ki~-gi to show the idea of possession being followed by the copula -ni. In example (10) the noun gita which is in the nominal predicate is showing the possessiveness of the shirt with the help of the possessive marker -gi and the copulative suffix -ni. In the case of the example (11) and (12) also, Mohon's ownership of the house and the ownership of the room by Lukhoi are respectively shown by using the possessive marker -gi and the copulative suffix -ni which are suffixed to their respective nominal predicate mohon in (11) and lukhoi in (12).

5.3 Purpose

A very interesting use of nominal predicate is to show the purpose of something. It shows for what purpose something is to be. Quite distinct from the construction of other nominal predicates, it has its own way of construction. How this construction is different from others is that to make the nominal predicate showing purpose, the verb has to be first nominalized to make a nominal form (derived noun). This nominal predicate is formed from the verb by suffixing the purposive marker -nə and the nominalizer -bə after which the copulative suffix -ni will be suffixed.

(13) həi-si ca-nə-bə-ni
fruit-prox eat-purp-nmlz-cop
'The fruit is for eating.'

(14) isiŋ-du t^{h}ək-nə-bə-ni
water-dist drink-purp-nmlz-cop
'That water is for drinking.'

(15) lairik-tu pa-nə-bə-ni
book-dist read-purp-nmlz-cop

'That book is for reading.'

All the predicates of the above examples from (13) to (15) are nominal predicates which are formed from the verbs i.e. ca 'eat', tʰək 'drink' and pa 'read' by suffixing the purposive marker -nə, nominalizer -bə and the copula -ni to them respectively. So, all these predicates show for what purpose the things represented by their respective subjects have to be used.

5.4 Benefactive

The nominal predicates in Manipuri can be used to show the benefitted one. For this purpose, the nominal form in the predicate slot has to be accompanied by some obligatory markers (suffixes) like possessive, benefactive, and particularization. After suffixing all these markers to the nominal form in order, the last affix added to the nominal is the copulative suffix -ni.

(16) lairik-si naoba-gi-dəmək-tə-ni
book-prox Naoba-poss-ben-part-cop
'This book is for Naoba.'

To show the person represented by the noun naoba which is in the predicate is benefitted, this nominal form has to be suffixed with the markers like possessive, benefactive, particularization and copula respectively. In such a way, the nominal predicate has been employed to show the idea of benefactive.

(17) gari-du rina-gi-dəmək-tə-ni
vehicle-dist Rina-poss-ben-part-cop
'That vehicle is for Rina.'

Here, the nominal form rina in the predicate is benefitted with a vehicle. It is shown by the addition of the possessive marker, benefactive marker and particularization marker. And the copulative suffix -ni is also obligatory because it links the nominal predicate to the subject gari 'vehicle'. This nominal predicate shows clearly that the noun in this predicate is benefitted with a vehicle.

5.5 Origin

In the context demanded to show the source or origin of someone or something, the nominal predicate can be used. To show the origin, the nominal in the predicate undergoes a morphological process. First the nominal predicate which represents the origin has to be suffixed with the ablative marker -təgi ~ -dəgi and then followed by the copulative suffix -ni.

(18) raɟu manipur-dəgi-ni
Raju Manipur-abl-cop
'Raju is from Manipur.'

The origin of the subject raɟu i.e. from where Raju is coming, in example (18) is indicated by the nominal predicate manipur to which the ablative marker -dəgi and the copulative suffix -ni are suffixed consecutively.

(19) ŋa-du pat-təgi-ni
fish-dist lake-abl-cop
'That fish is from lake.'

In the above example (19), after the nominal predicate pat 'lake' is suffixed with the ablative marker -təgi and the copulative suffix -ni, it shows from where the fish has been brought i.e. the source of the fish. So, to show the origin of something, the noun (representing the referent of the origin) that is in the nominal predicate has to be obligatorily suffixed with the ablative marker which signals the source or origin. And finally the copula -ni is to be obligatorily suffixed.

6. Adjectival Predicate

Adjectival predicates are clauses in which the main semantic content is expressed by an adjective (Payne, 1997). Manipuri adjectival words are formed from the stative verbs by prefixing the formative or attributive marker ə- and suffixing the nominalizer -pə ~ -bə and some of them are formed without adding the attributive marker ə-.

Stative verb		Adjective	
tən	'lazy'	ə-tən-bə	'lazy'
p^hə	'good'	ə-p^hə-bə	'good'
p^həɟə	'beauty'	p^həɟə-bə	'beauty'
waŋ	'tall'	ə-waŋ-bə	'tall'
t^ha	'thick'	ə-t^ha-bə	'thick'
noi	'fat'	ə-noi-bə	'fat'
pa	'thin'	ə-pa-bə	'thin'
ten	'short'	ə-ten-bə	'short'
kən	'hard/strong'	ə-kən-bə	'hard/strong'

Table 1

If the adjectival words are used attributively, the proper forms of the adjective are employed but they cannot be used predicatively because the proper adjectival forms cannot take place in the slot of predicate of a sentence.

(20) ə-tən-bə nupa
att-lazy-nmlz man
'lazy man'

(21) p^həɟə-bə ləi
beauty-nmlz flower
'beautiful flower'

(22) ə-waŋ-bə nupi
att-tall-nmlz woman
'tall woman'

From example (20) to (22) clearly show that the proper adjectival forms i.e. ətənbə, p^həɟəbə and əwaŋbə are taking place as they are used attributively modifying their respective head nouns.

The stative verbs which are having adjectival meaning in English exhibit the same grammatical properties as verbs do have. So, when they are used predicatively, it cannot be said they are adjectival predicates.

(23) (a) ma ca t^hək-i [action verb]
3sg tea drink-sam
'He drinks tea.'

(b) mək^{h}oi lak-le [action verb]
3pl come-prf
'They have come.'

(24) (a) ma waŋ-i [stative verb giving the adjectival meaning]
3sg tall-sam
'He is tall.'

(b) ləi-du pʰəɟə-re [stative verb giving the adjectival meaning]
flower-dist beautiful-prf
'That flower is beautiful.'

The sentences given in the example (24) show that the stative verbs i.e. waŋ 'tall' pʰəɟə 'beautiful' having the adjectival meaning are taking the inflectional suffixes like other action verbs i.e. tʰək 'drink' and lak 'come' in the example (23). Since they are behaving like many other verbs, they need not take copula while they are used as a predicate. So, they cannot be an adjectival predicate but should be a kind of intransitive verbal predicate.

However some Manipuri adjectives can take place in the predicate of a sentence. There is a context in which adjectival predicates can be used only when they are going to describe or predicate about the referent of the subject which is selected from a group to make it distinct from the remaining others.

(25) mədu pʰəɟə-bə ləi-ni
that beautiful-nmlz flower-cop
'That is a beautiful flower.'

The attributively used adjective pʰəɟəbə can be used predicatively like in the following example.

(26) ləi-du-di pʰəɟə-bə-ni
flower-dist-part beautiful-nmlz-cop
'That flower is beautiful.' (lit. Among many flowers, only that one is beautiful.)

Here the adjectival predicate is suffixed with the copula -ni and it predicates about the subject which is a selected one. The particularization marker -di is optional.

(27) mədu ə-pʰə-bə komla-ni
that att-good-nmlz orange-cop
'That is a good orange.'

The adjective əpʰəbə which is used attributively can also be used predicatively.

(28) komla-du ə-pʰə-bə-ni
orange-dist att-good-nmlz-cop
'That orange is good.'

The predicate in the example (28) is the adjective əpʰəbə 'good' being followed by the copulative suffix -ni. Since the predicate is an adjective, it does not take any verbal inflectional suffix. Instead it is obligatorily taking the copula -ni. So, adjectival predicate requires copula to show a link with the subject of the sentence.

7. Locative Predicate

To make a predicate which indicates a location, the existential verb ləi 'be at' or 'exist' is used combining with an expression indicating location. It makes a connection between the theme expression (subject) and the expression denoting a location (part of the predicate) of a sentence. It is very common for a different copula to be used with locative predicates, one that has location as part of its meaning (Shopen, 2007). In Manipuri the expression denoting location in a predicate is always suffixed with the locative marker -də and then after it here comes the existential verb ləi.

(29) hui-du ləikol-də ləi
dog-dist garden-loc exist
'The dog is in the garden.'

By using the existential verb ləi, the location ləikol 'garden' where the dog exists is indicated. So, the locative predicate is formed with the existential verb ləi with the expression denoting location.

(30) ma cakkʰum-də ləi
3sg kitchen-loc exist
'She is in the kitchen.'

Here the existential verb ləi combined with the expression denoting the location cakkʰum 'kitchen' makes a proper locative predicate, and it shows us the location where the subject ma is to be available.

(31) əŋaŋ-du sumaŋ-də ləi
baby-dist courtyard-loc exist
'The baby is in the courtyard.'

The expression denoting location sumaŋ 'courtyard' suffixed with the locative marker -də combined with the existential verb reveals us the location where the baby is to be.

8. Existential Predicate

The existential predicate is meant to express the existence of someone or something. To make an existential predicate, the same existential verb ləi 'exist' used for locative predicate is to be employed. Here in an existential predicate the expression denoting the location is used but emphasis is given on the existence of something either animate or inanimate. The common pattern for Tibeto-Burman languages seems to be at least a two term copular system, distinguishing equational and existential functions (DeLancey,1992).

(32) turel-də ŋa ləi
river-loc fish exist
'There is fish in the river.'

The existence of fish in the river is indicated by the combination of the expression denoting location and the existential verb ləi 'exist' which is the predicate of the sentence. But here the expression denoting location turel 'river' comes at the very beginning of the sentence and precedes the theme expression ŋa 'fish'.

(33) impʰal-də kəŋla ləi
Imphal-loc Kangla exist
'The Kangla is in Imphal.'

The same thing like in (32) happens in (33). The predicate which is denoting location is at the beginning of the sentence and the existential verb ləi 'exist' is at the end of the sentence. By the combination of the locative expression impʰal with the existential verb ləi, the existence of kəŋla in impʰal is clearly shown.

8.1 Existential Predicate for Predicate Possession

The first predicate possession had been discussed in § 4.2. The second type of predicate possession is to be formed with the existential predicate. Now this existential predicate can express the possessiveness or ownership of something.

(34) rani-gi pʰi əmə ləi
Rani-poss cloth one exist
'Rani has a cloth (lit. There is a cloth with Rani).'

Here it has been seen from the above example that with the existential verb ləi, the possessiveness of p^hi 'cloth' by Rani is indicated. It means the existence of the cloth with Rani.

(35) mək^{h}oi-gi hui əmə ləi
3pl-poss dog one exist
'They have a dog (lit. There is a dog with them).'

The existential verb ləi shows that the theme expression hui əmə 'a dog' is possessed by the possessor mək^{h}oi suffixed with the possessive marker -gi. Only this cannot make a sentence which shows a complete possessiveness. So, the existential verb ləi is employed for this purpose.

9. Conclusion

It has been clearly seen that the copula in Manipuri is playing a great role in making many nonverbal predicates. The copula -ni is used in the nominal predicate of identity, possession, purpose, benefactive and origin. It is also used for making some adjectival predicates. For making sentences showing past and future time reference another verb oi is used. For past time reference the verb is used with the aspect marker -rəm and -gəni for future time reference. An existential verb ləi is used for making predicate of locative, existential and possessive.

Abbreviations

3	third person	nmlz	nominalizer
abl	ablative	prt	particularization
att	attributive	pl	plural
ben	benefactive	poss	possessive
cop	copula	prf	perfective
dist	distal	prx	proximal
dur	durative	purp	purposive
irr	irrealis	sam	simple aspect marker
loc	locative	sg	singular
neg	negative		

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A Critical Survey of the Three-language Formula since independence with special reference to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

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ABSTRACT

Since 1948, India's national education policies and commissions have consistently articulated ambitious ideals for educational advancement, inclusivity, and national development. The latest iteration, NEP 2020, continues this tradition, presenting a vision of equitable access to quality education for all, transcending socio-economic barriers and empowering youth through holistic learning. However, a persistent challenge has been the significant chasm between these aspirational pronouncements and their effective on-ground implementation. This paper posits that this enduring gap between theory and practice is a critical impediment to realizing the transformative potential of India's education policies. To illustrate this point, we undertake a detailed examination of the three-language formula, a recurring recommendation across several national education policies, including the NEP 2020. Tracing its historical trajectory from the University Education Commission (1948) through the Kothari Commission (1964-66), the National Policy on Education (1968 & 1986), the Programme of Action (1992), and the National Curriculum Frameworks (2000 & 2005), we observe a consistent reiteration of the importance of mother tongue-based education alongside the promotion of Hindi and English. While each policy document nuances its approach, the fundamental objective of fostering multilingualism for national unity and educational equity remains a constant refrain.

Despite this sustained emphasis, the implementation of the three-language formula has been fraught with challenges, including resistance from non-Hindi speaking states, inadequate resource allocation, inconsistencies in pedagogical approaches, and varying levels of teacher preparedness. By critically analyzing the historical context and the specific recommendations of NEP 2020 regarding the three-language formula, this paper aims to highlight the enduring disconnect between policy articulation and practical realization in India's pursuit of educational reform. Ultimately, it underscores the urgent need for effective strategies to bridge this rhetoric-reality gap to ensure that the lofty ideals enshrined in NEP 2020 translate into tangible improvements in the educational landscape and contribute meaningfully to inclusive growth and national development.

1. Introduction

One of the most prominent recommendations put forth in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is the reinforcement of the three-language formula as a strategic approach to advancing education through the medium of respective mother tongues of the students in question, particularly at the foundational and middle school levels. This aligns with the revised

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pedagogical and curricular framework outlined in the policy. Chapter 4, specifically subsection 4.13, of the NEP 2020 document explicitly endorses and encourages the implementation of this multilingual approach. However, it is important to acknowledge that this recommendation is not unique to NEP 2020. Therefore, a critical examination of the historical trajectory of the three-language formula, since its initial introduction in post-independence India, is both relevant and necessary.

2. Historical overview of the three-language formula

2.1. University Education Commission (1948)

We shall begin this section with a concise review of the University Education Commission (1948) which is popularly referred to as the Radhakrishnan Commission, to locate the first historical instance of the recommendation of the three-language, or something of a similar nature, in independent India. Despite the fact that there was no direct and explicit mention of the three-language formula in the Radhakrishnan Commission report, however it is important to note that we get to trace the first instance of insistence for the promotion of a multilingual education system in India, in the same report. Furthermore, the introduction of mother tongue, as medium of instruction, at the primary and secondary levels of education and the use of Hindi language, wherever possible, for the sake of national integration, was encouraged in the commission report. The study of the English language was suggested at the level of higher education, particularly in the domains of science and technology because of its contemporary global status as the language of international scholarship. However, we must concede that there was no explicit mention of the three-language formula in the Radhakrishnan Commission report. Therefore the reason for reviewing the Radhakrishnan Commission rests on its historical merit for serving as the source of inspiration for subsequent commissions and policies that did introduce, advocate and discuss the three-language formula.

2.2. Kothari Commission (1964-66)

Next, we turn to the Kothari Commission (1964–66), formally known as the Education Commission of 1964–66, which marked a significant moment in the development of language policy in independent India. For the first time, the Commission made an explicit and structured recommendation in favor of a three-language policy. It strongly advocated the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, particularly at the primary level of schooling, as per the then existing pedagogic structure / hierarchy. The continued encouragement of the mother tongue at higher levels of education was also recommended, wherever feasible, in order to enhance both its status and functional use in education and elsewhere. Additionally, the Commission emphasized the promotion of Hindi for the purpose of fostering national integration and instilling a sense of unity and national identity and integrity among the students - the future citizens of India. At the same time, English was accorded an important role, particularly in the domains of science, technology, and higher education - in general - due to its global relevance and utility in international communication and knowledge exchange. However, the Commission did caution against yielding to the English language to overshadow Indian languages and urged that appropriate safeguards be put in place to ensure the sustained development and use of Indian languages alongside English, especially in the context of higher education in science and technology, medicine, law and international trade and commerce.

2.3. National Policy of Education (1968)

Moving on, we take up the National Policy of Education (1968) where we encounter the reiteration of a number of suggestions and observations that were made in the previous Kothari Commission policy document with regards to the promotion of mother-tongue education and the three-language formula. Experts agree on the point that the most significant recommendations in the NPE 1968 were the ones pertaining to the three-language formula. It has further been noted that the NPE 1968 was a more detailed and comprehensive document than its predecessor, the Kothari Commission document, vis-a-vis the structured approach towards the effective implementation of the three-language formula and the projection of the same as the best way to realise our multilingual educational goals. We find the recommendation of using mother tongue or regional languages as the principle medium of instruction at the primary level of education. At the higher levels of education-namely, secondary and beyond-the continued use of the mother tongue or regional language is to be encouraged, including as a medium of instruction, wherever and as long as feasible, and in accordance with the linguistic viability and functional status of the language(s) concerned. Hindi was identified as the national link language and was therefore strongly recommended for widespread acquisition, particularly among students, with the aim of fostering a sense of linguistic unity across the country's inherently diverse linguistic landscape - for the purposes of fostering national fraternity and integrity. The issue of the English language in the Indian education system was taken up next - and its role was duly recognised as the language of higher education in the arenas of science, technology, medicine and international commerce. Therefore, it was recommended that the language should be taught as either a second or third language from the primary and secondary levels of education, whichever is more convenient. However, the policy was marred in controversy as it was accused of promoting the three-language formula to give effect to Hindi language imposition upon the non-Hindi speaking states of India, by making it implicitly difficult for students from the non-Hindi speaking states to compete for better education and lucrative employment opportunities, especially at the national level, which, in effect would deprive the same from availing the avenues of upward social mobility.

2.4. National Policy on Education (1986)

Next in line comes the National Policy on Education (1986) which reaffirmed the three-language formula as a vital instrument for promoting equity, national integration, and multilingualism, while seeking to maintain a balanced emphasis on regional languages, Hindi, and English. It strongly recommended the use of the mother tongue or the respective regional languages as the first language and the foremost medium of instruction at the primary level of school education, and encouraged its continued use up to the secondary level as well. Hindi was designated as the second language in non-Hindi-speaking states, with the aim of enabling students in those regions to acquire communicative proficiency in it, while it remained as the first language for students in the Hindi-speaking states of India. This approach was intended to establish Hindi as a national language capable of serving as a unifying linguistic force in a linguistically diverse country. English was positioned as the third language, with formal instruction to begin at the secondary level. The policy acknowledged English as a language of global relevance, especially in science, technology, and higher education, and highlighted its role in providing access to international knowledge systems and improving employment prospects in business, technology, and administration. It also recognized English as a key factor in ensuring social mobility and individual economic advancement. However, the policy attracted significant criticism,

particularly from non-Hindi-speaking regions, where it was perceived as an attempt to impose Hindi and thus as an act of linguistic domination. The overt endeavour to establish Hindi as the national language was strongly resisted by the non-Hindi speaking states, especially those from southern India. Additionally, the successful implementation of the policy's language provisions was hindered by a lack of adequate resources, further complicating its reception and execution / operationalisation across the country.

2.5. Programme of Action / PoA (1992) -

The Programme of Action (1992) was designed as a follow-up framework / program to assess and facilitate the effective execution of the recommendations outlined in the National Policy on Education (1986). It provided a comprehensive set of strategies aimed at ensuring the practical realization of the policy's goals, particularly with regard to promoting linguistic equity and unity within multilingual India. Mirroring the aspirations of the 1986 policy, the PoA (1992) sought to maintain a delicate balance among the promotion of mother tongues/regional languages, Hindi, and English. It strongly endorsed the use of mother tongues or regional languages as the primary medium of instruction at the elementary level, with the objective of improving comprehension and, thereby, fostering early cognitive development. Furthermore, it encouraged the continued use of these languages at the secondary level to strengthen cultural identity and linguistic diversity, thereby enabling learners to develop fluency and confidence in their native languages. In parallel, the PoA (1992) advocated for the promotion of Hindi as a link language to facilitate national integration through linguistic cohesion. It recommended that Hindi be taught as a second language in non-Hindi speaking states, starting from the primary level and extending through secondary education, while ensuring adequate resources, teacher training, and instructional materials to support its acquisition. English was designated as the third language, to be introduced at the secondary level, primarily due to its growing relevance in the global exchange of knowledge, and its role in higher education, science, technology, business, and administration. However, the document clearly stated that the emphasis on English must not diminish the significance of regional languages or Hindi; efforts to promote and preserve them were to be pursued with equal diligence. The specific and separate emphasis on Hindi in the policy is particularly noteworthy. While the PoA (1992) called for a flexible and context-sensitive - read linguistic identity sensitive - implementation of the three-language formula - especially with regard to promoting Hindi in non-Hindi-speaking regions - it failed to escape the controversies and resistance that had troubled earlier policies. Despite its recommendations for the development of quality language education resources, training of competent teachers, support for bilingual education, and enhanced national proficiency in Hindi, the PoA (1992) faced substantial criticism, particularly from non-Hindi-speaking communities. Many perceived it as an instrument for imposing Hindi on regions with distinct linguistic identities, just as in the case of its predecessor policies. The subtle difference in vocabulary with regards to upholding Hindi as a national link language and not as the national language - was met with hostile scepticism and resentment from the non-Hindi speaking states and sections of the country. Additionally, the unequal allocation of educational resources and the inconsistent implementation of the policy - owing to regional political dynamics and diverse linguistic aspirations - proved to be rather significant challenges. The disparities in English language acquisition also emerged as a major concern, as the lack of qualified teachers and quality learning materials across different regions exacerbated educational inequalities and left large sections of the population at a systemic disadvantage.

2.6. National Curriculum Framework / NCF (2000)

As we move on to the National Curriculum Framework (2000) we notice that the policy makers have made prudent concessions with regards to the promotion of the three-language formula bearing in mind, and in policy provisions, an amenable approach - to broach the issue with due flexibility - keeping, nay prioritizing, the regional linguistic diversity, needs and aspirations of the people. It goes on to recognise the linguistic diversity of India not only as one of its most prominent defining features but as one of its greatest strengths and untapped potential resources. As such, the NCF 2000 policy document duly recognised the defining multilingual characteristic of the nation and recommended to foster enhanced communication skills and ensure better social cohesion through effective and efficient cultural exchange and mutual understanding by championing the cause of multiculturalism through multilingualism. It also aimed to establish the nation's multilingual profile as a source of great strength and potential for growth and development at the international level. The National Curriculum Framework (2000) was an important document that strongly advocated the implementation of the 3-language formula but with due flexibility prioritizing the regional linguistic needs and aspirations. The importance of multilingualism and linguistic diversity of India was reaffirmed in this policy document, with well over 1600 languages populating the nation. The NCF 2000 recognised India's linguistic diversity as one of its greatest strengths - that had the potential to foster enhanced communication skills, ensure social cohesion and better cultural exchange and comprehension - and aimed to provide such recommendations that would further enhance the nation's multilingual profile, worldwide. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2000 proposed the promotion of mother tongues, Hindi, and English across all stages of education in India, aligning its recommendations with the nation's complex and diverse linguistic landscape. It firmly supported the implementation of the three-language policy, with an emphasis on context-sensitive adaptation rather than uniform application. In contrast to earlier policy documents that tended toward a standardized, one-size-fits-all approach, the NCF 2000 explicitly acknowledged the impracticality of such rigidity in a linguistically pluralistic country. It proposed that Hindi-speaking students could study Hindi as their first language, choose a regional language as their second, and adopt English as their third language. Conversely, students in non-Hindi-speaking states could take their mother tongue or regional language as the first language, and choose between Hindi and English as their second language, thus allowing for local autonomy in the selection of the second and third languages. This marked a progressive shift from earlier models, offering greater flexibility while still maintaining an underlying thrust toward the promotion of Hindi and English. The push for Hindi as a link language remained a consistent feature, continuing despite long-standing criticisms and resistance from non-Hindi-speaking regions. At the same time, the NCF 2000 recognized English as a global language essential for accessing scientific and technical knowledge and for enabling meaningful participation in global economic processes. In terms of pedagogy, the framework proposed a learner-centric approach to language instruction, aimed at developing the four key dimensions of language proficiency-listening, speaking, reading, and writing-through interactive and communicative methodologies. Classroom strategies such as language games, creative writing, oral discussions, and other participatory exercises were recommended to foster engagement and fluency. Furthermore, the NCF 2000 marked a significant departure from traditional assessment models by advocating for Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) in language education. It proposed innovative assessment tools such as language profiling, group projects, oral presentations, and collaborative discussions to evaluate linguistic competence holistically.

Through these recommendations, the NCF 2000 attempted to modernize and democratize language learning while addressing the socio-political sensitivities associated with linguistic diversity in India. Despite all of the aforementioned, we find that the NCF 2000 too was haunted by severe criticism. It drew the flak of public opinion on the grounds of allegedly propagating linguistic imperialism through its advocacy of Hindi language. Furthermore, there were some serious concerns regarding the lack of quality TLMs as well as the issue of accessibility to the same. The sheer dearth of a reasonably adequate number of qualified teachers to impart instructions across the multilingual classrooms of the country - particularly the paucity of both resources and resource persons in rural areas, was a grave concern and a serious demerit that the NCF 2000 failed to address to the satisfaction of the people of India. There were also some pressing misgivings with regards to the situation where students might feel the undue burden of learning multiple languages - which many feared would be unnecessarily taxing for the students. This was particularly felt as the NCF 2000 also meant to evaluate the proficiency of the students in the languages taught as a part of the school curriculum.

2.7. National Curriculum Framework / NCF (2005)

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 represents a pivotal policy document that significantly contributed to the ongoing discourse surrounding the implementation of the three-language policy in India. Drawing on the flexible approach as was already proposed in the NCF 2000 policy document, it recommended that the strategy be adapted contextually to the linguistic realities of the different regions in India. Consistent with its predecessor, the NCF 2005 reaffirmed the use of the mother tongue as the preferred medium of instruction at the elementary level, while also advocating for its continued encouragement at the secondary stage of education. Hindi was recommended as a second language for non-Hindi-speaking learners; however, the policy clarified that this recommendation should not be construed as a compulsory mandate for states or regions - which would seem as a strategic incorporation to avoid the barrage of controversies that all the preceding policies had to encounter. At the same time, it reiterated earlier positions that framed Hindi as a potential link language to promote national integration. Where NCF 2005 marked a departure from its predecessors was in its emphasis on fostering linguistic harmony between Hindi and the regional languages. It proposed that Hindi should be taught in a culturally sensitive manner, especially in non-Hindi-speaking states, to avoid alienation or resentment - and ensure that the non-Hindi speaking population does not feel any sort of compulsion - akin to linguistic imperialism - to acquire a certain mandatory degree of proficiency in its usage. Language educators and curriculum designers were urged to ensure that the teaching of Hindi does not marginalize or devalue regional linguistic identities. On the other hand, the English language was designated as a third language and was not to be introduced at the primary level of school education, to avoid any perception of imposition. Instead, its instruction was recommended from the secondary level onward. While the policy did acknowledge English as the language of global communication and accepted it as a critical conduit for access to international knowledge systems, higher education, research, technology, business, and administration, it also stressed that this recognition must not come at the cost of undermining the status of Hindi or regional languages. Thus, a balanced and context-sensitive approach to English language education is seen to be advocated in the NCF 2005 policy document. In addition, the NCF 2005 promoted a comprehensive model of language learning, integrating regional linguistic aspirations and employing holistic assessment mechanisms, including the paradigm of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) as already

introduced and discussed in NCF 2000. Innovative, student-centric strategies aimed at developing communicative competence across the four verticals of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills were emphasized. However, this document too was not without its fair share of controversies. Critics argued that despite its ostensibly inclusive tone, it remained complicit in perpetuating a more subtly articulated form of Hindi linguistic imperialism. Concerns were also raised about overburdening students through excessive focus on language proficiency assessment especially under the CCE framework, a reiteration of the reservation people had with the provision in NCF 2000. Moreover, the persistent problems of inadequate resources, the shortage of professionally trained language teachers, as well as the unequal distribution of educational infrastructure across states and union territories significantly impeded the effective implementation of its ambitious recommendations.

2.8. Draft National Policy of Education / Draft NPE (2016)

We shall now turn our attention to the Draft National Policy of Education (2016), the final national-level policy document preceding the National Education Policy (2020), which reaffirmed the continued relevance of the three-language formula, while introducing certain key observations to refine its approach. Firstly, it underscored the importance of implementing the formula in a context-sensitive manner, allowing for regional linguistic requirements and cultural aspirations to shape its adoption, a provision in tandem with the recommendations made in previous policy documents. This flexibility was intended to prevent the perception or actuality of linguistic imposition or imperialism. Secondly, the draft policy reiterated the value of sustaining the three-language formula as a means to nurture an appreciation of India's multilingual heritage and to cultivate intercultural sensitivity and mutual respect among the learners. Thirdly, it advocated for linguistic inclusivity, recommending that no single language or linguistic group be privileged to the detriment or disadvantage of the others. As with previous policy frameworks, the mother tongue was to remain the primary language of instruction, with Hindi and other regional languages designated as second languages, and English continuing in the role of a third language. Furthermore, in alignment with the evolving pedagogical practices, the draft policy recommended a focus on the recruitment and training of qualified language teachers, the integration of interactive pedagogical strategies in classrooms, and the creation of digital resources to support language teaching and learning, i.e. ICT (Information and Communication Technology) tools. It also encouraged the localization of teaching materials and study content to suit regional linguistic contexts and identities and emphasized raising public awareness about India’s multilingual legacy. However, despite its apparent progressive stance, the Draft NPE 2016 faced significant criticism. Many observers accused it of using carefully constructed, superficially inclusive rhetoric to obscure a deeper agenda of promoting Hindi at the expense of regional and indigenous languages. This perceived neglect provoked strong opposition, particularly from non-Hindi-speaking states in southern and northeastern India, where concerns about linguistic hegemony remain deeply rooted. Additionally, the draft policy was scrutinized for its failure to account for infrastructural and systemic challenges, including the persistence of the digital divide, lack of transparency in funding mechanisms, inadequate institutional accountability, and a discernible shift towards the centralization and privatization of the education system. These structural and ideological concerns were seen as potential threats to the equitable and effective implementation of the three-language policy, eliciting widespread resistance from various stakeholders and regional, both Hindi and non-Hindi linguistic constituencies.

2.9. Review Digest

This summary review of the major education commissions, policies and reports, since independence, is extremely significant and pertinent to a critical examination of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) with special regards to the recommendations contained therein with regards to the the promotion of mother-tongue education and the strong advocacy for the implementation of the three-language formula to achieve the same, in the 21st century multilingual India. It is, therefore, indubitably evident - and must be duly acknowledged -that the most recent policy, i.e. NEP 2020, emerges from a long-standing tradition of educational policy initiatives, particularly in relation to the recommendation of implementing the three-language formula. This continuity is especially apparent in the provisions concerning "Multilingualism and the Power of Language" as outlined in Chapter 4, Sections 4.11 to 4.22 of the National Education Policy (2020). With this historical and ideological context in place, we shall now proceed to critically examine the recommendations articulated in the NEP 2020 regarding its stated commitment to promoting and advancing education through the medium of the mother tongue, home language, local language, or regional language and its endeavour to project the three-language formula as the means of achieving the same, with special reference to Sections 4.12 and 4.13.

3. Review of three language formula - sections 4.12 & 4.13 of NEP 2020

3.1. Review of Section 4.12

We find that in Chapter 4, section 4.12, of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, there is explicit reference to the three-language formula which has been heralded as the way to realise the cognitive potential of school children, at the foundational and preparatory stages of early childhood education and care, as per the revised curricular and pedagogical framework proposed in the NEP 2020 document, as well as the benefits of multilingualism. Although not too many words have been spared specifically with regards to the implementation of the three-language formula in this section, however the policy makers have presented us with the recommendation of the same in such a manner as if to contend that the successful implementation of the formula will ensure the achievement of all the goals recognised in this particular section of Chapter 4.

3.2. Review of Section 4.13

Turning to Section 4.13 of the National Education Policy (2020), it becomes evident that the policy strongly advocates for the robust and context-sensitive implementation of the three-language formula. While every effort is to be made to ensure the effective realisation of this multilingual strategy, equal attention must be accorded to the linguistic aspirations of the people, the regional and national contexts, and the constitutional provisions that safeguard linguistic freedom and diversity. The policy thus calls for a careful and judicious execution of the formula-one that promotes multilingualism as a national virtue while simultaneously fostering a shared sense of national identity within India's culturally and linguistically diverse society. Importantly, the policy affirms that no language shall be imposed upon any state or citizen. Instead, the choice of languages shall remain with the learners and the respective regions, based on their specific linguistic needs and preferences. This underscores the policy's commitment to linguistic flexibility and democratic pluralism in education. In implementing the three-language policy, the only stipulation is that two out of the three languages studied must be of Indian origin. Additionally, students will be permitted to change one or more of the languages they are studying around Grades 6 or 7, provided they are able to demonstrate basic or functional proficiency in

the chosen languages, and possess a foundational understanding of literary practices in at least one of them-mandatorily an Indian language - by the end of their secondary education.

4. Discussion and Critique

4.1. Discussion

In continuation with the previous section, we come to appreciate the merits of multilingualism and mother-tongue education - the fact that it is of immense cognitive benefit and cultural significance for young learners to receive instruction in their respective mother-tongue languages - all of which has been very strongly articulated in Section 4.12 of the NEP 2020 policy document. However, its advocacy for the implementation of the three-language formula as the best means of realising the aforementioned potentials is to be taken with a pinch of salt.

On close scrutiny of the Sections 4.12 and 4.13 of Chapter 4 of NEP 2020 we come to realise that the implications are vastly different between the scheduled and non-scheduled languages of India. A cursory examination reveals that languages recognized under the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India are significantly more likely to be promoted as mediums of instruction-whether as mother tongues, home languages, local or regional languages-than those not yet included in the Schedule. Although the Constitution does not specify any definitive criteria for the inclusion of languages in the Eighth Schedule, certain factors appear to consistently influence the process. These include the number of native speakers, a well-documented literary tradition, official recognition by state governments, and, crucially, support from the President of India. An illustrative example is Sanskrit, which, despite having a minimal number of active speakers, was included in the inaugural list of 14 scheduled languages, primarily owing to its rich literary heritage, cultural prestige, and widespread symbolic acceptance across states.

It is evident that inclusion in the Eighth Schedule confers tangible benefits, including greater prospects for representation and promotion within national education policies. These advantages are far less accessible to the vast number of languages not included in the Schedule. Official records indicate that while India is home to over 1,600 languages, out of which only 22 are currently recognized under the Eighth Schedule, and yet another approximately 38 languages are reportedly under consideration for inclusion. This suggests that a significant majority of Indian languages have not managed to mobilize the requisite institutional support or community advocacy necessary to initiate and sustain a formal demand for recognition. Whether due to inadequate documentation of speaker populations, the absence of a clearly delineated literary tradition, or lack of acknowledgment by local governments, many of these languages-despite being spoken natively by millions - remain grossly under-resourced and thus have little opportunity to attain official status or policy support.

The implications of this disparity are profound. The fact that only 22 languages have been accorded scheduled language status to date means that the overwhelming majority of Indian languages lack the formal recognition as official languages. As a result, they are far less likely to be meaningfully integrated into educational frameworks or featured prominently in language promotion strategies recommended by national policy documents. This imbalance poses a serious risk of perpetuating linguistic inequities and fostering a skewed representation of India's rich multilingual landscape within the broader discourse of language and education policy - which may further get aggravated by the implementation of the three-language formula that puts the endangered and lesser-known indigenous languages of the nation at greater risk of

marginalisation, threatening their very existence due to increased language shift and failure of language maintenance.

4.2. Critique

The situation of non-scheduled languages in India is especially precarious. Speakers of these languages face considerable disadvantages, primarily due to the extreme resource deprivation that characterizes their linguistic communities. These languages are seldom equipped with the necessary tools—such as standardized orthographies, grammatical documentation, or lexical databases—that would enable their functional use in institutional settings, particularly in formal education. Consequently, their application as mediums of instruction in schools remains severely constrained. The challenges faced by students whose mother tongues belong to this category are substantial and cannot be overlooked. Most non-scheduled languages lack codified scripts and documented linguistic resources, making their classroom use virtually unfeasible. Their literary traditions, if existent, are predominantly oral, further complicating their integration into mainstream pedagogical frameworks.

Many of these languages are also critically endangered, teetering on the brink of extinction. Their speakers are increasingly undergoing a language shift due to the hegemonic influence of dominant languages, especially those listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. In this context, the implementation of the three-language formula, as proposed by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, may inadvertently exacerbate the decline of these languages. Rather than preserving linguistic diversity, the policy may serve as a catalyst for further language attrition and eventual extinction, owing to the pressures of institutional neglect and lack of curricular representation.

Under such circumstances, the survival of these languages is contingent upon targeted and sustained governmental intervention—not only for preservation but also for revitalization and promotion. The demise of any language signifies more than just the loss of a communication system; it entails the erasure of an entire cultural and epistemological worldview, including unique literary forms, oral traditions, and sociocultural practices. The extinction of a language effectively diminishes the plurality of human expression and knowledge. As each language disappears, the global linguistic landscape becomes significantly poorer.

The NEP 2020, despite its emphasis on the use of mother tongue/local language as the medium of instruction in early education, offers little clarity on how to develop pedagogical resources and instructional frameworks for non-scheduled languages. It fails to provide a detailed roadmap for the creation of textbooks, teaching tools, or capacity-building programs for these under-resourced languages. As such, the policy's recommendations fall short of addressing the needs of children who identify these endangered and marginalized languages as their mother tongues. Implementing the three-language formula in such contexts is not only impractical but also potentially harmful to the linguistic health of these communities; it risks accelerating their decline rather than ensuring their survival.

Moreover, the policy is inherently inequitable for students whose mother tongues are non-scheduled indigenous languages, as it effectively obliges them to learn three additional languages—often with no overlap with their native linguistic repertoire. This creates an undue cognitive and academic burden. In some multilingual regions, such as parts of West Bengal, it is not uncommon for young children to be proficient in as many as 7–8 marginal languages, none of which are officially recognized. Yet, these children are still required to acquire two or more

entirely new languages under the three-language formula, compounding their educational disadvantage.

The practical challenges of promoting a non-scheduled, marginalized, and largely oral language in alignment with the NEP 2020's recommendations are formidable. Most of these languages lack orthographic systems, published texts, or even basic lexicons that could serve as foundational materials in educational settings. The absence of written literature, grammar texts, and dictionaries makes it extremely difficult to use these languages in any formal instructional capacity. Furthermore, many are classified as endangered or critically endangered, with few fluent speakers remaining—often elderly or disconnected from the formal education system. The lack of a critical mass of proficient speakers severely limits the pool of potential teachers capable of providing instruction in these languages, either as subjects themselves or as mediums for teaching other disciplines.

This shortage becomes especially problematic in subjects such as mathematics and science, which rely heavily on abstract, technical vocabulary and structured pedagogical approaches. In the absence of script systems and established terminologies, it becomes nearly impossible to translate these concepts into marginalized indigenous languages, rendering their use in such domains pedagogically unviable.

5. Conclusion

In essence, the three-language formula, as currently conceptualized, constitutes a form of linguistic imposition on students who do not speak any of the scheduled languages as their mother tongue, home language, or regional language. These students are, by default, compelled to learn one of the 22 scheduled languages solely because their native tongue lacks official recognition. This effectively increases their linguistic load to four or more languages, placing them at an even greater disadvantage within the educational system. Many of these students belong to already marginalized communities and are often first-generation learners. Thus, rather than promoting inclusivity and equity, the current structure of the three-language formula risks deepening existing disparities and further disenfranchising the very communities it purports to empower.

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বাঙালির বাংলা ব্যাকরণ-শিক্ষা শুরুর হাল হকিকৎ

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ABSTRACT

বাঙালি, সাম্প্রতিক সময়ে বাংলা ভাষাশিক্ষার ক্ষেত্রে কতোটা আন্তরিক সে নিয়ে বিতর্ক রয়েছে, সন্দেহ নেই। কিন্তু আগ্রহীরা জানেন মাত্র দু'শ বছর আগে স্বতন্ত্র ভাষা হিসেবে বাংলাকে পড়ার কোনও সুযোগ বিদ্যায়তনিকক্ষেত্রে ছিল না। ফলে বলা বাহুল্য, বাঙালির বাংলা ব্যাকরণশিক্ষার সুযোগও সেক্ষেত্রে অনুপস্থিত। বাংলা, ভাষা হিসেবে সুপ্রাচীন; তর্কাতীত তার অন্তত হাজার বছরের ঐতিহ্য। অথচ বাংলা ব্যাকরণ সেই তুলনায় কিন্তু অর্বাচীন। কিন্তু কেন? হাজার বছর বয়সী বাংলা ভাষার ছাত্ররা তাহলে কী পড়তো? বাংলাভাষা শেখা ও শেখানো কতোটা তার পাঠ্যাভ্যাসের সঙ্গে জড়িয়ে ছিল? অর্থাৎ বাংলা ভাষায় গোটা প্রাগাধুনিক যুগে নানা সংরূপে সাহিত্য চর্চা হলেও আসলে বাঙালি ছাত্র তার দৈনিক পাঠ্যাভ্যাসে কি আদৌ স্বতন্ত্র ভাষা হিসেবে বাংলা পড়তো? কেদারনাথ মজুমদার তাঁর বাঙ্গালা সাময়িক সাহিত্যে-এ প্রসঙ্গে বলছেন-

"বাঙ্গালা লিখার বিষয় ছিল-স্বরবর্ণ,ব্যঞ্জনবর্ণ,এক-দুই,কড়াকিয়া, বুড়িকিয়া ইত্যাদি। মুখে মুখে শিক্ষার বিষয় ছিল-শুভঙ্করের আর্য্যা, এবং তৎসংক্রান্ত মানসিক গণনা। পাঠের বিষয় ছিল-সরস্বতী বন্দনা ও চাণক্য শ্লোক। একজন অপেক্ষাকৃত বয়স্থ বালক সম্মুখে হাঁটু গাড়িয়া বসিয়া জোড় হস্তে সরস্বতী-বন্দনা আবৃত্তি করিত, তাহার পশ্চাতে ঐরূপ ভাবে বসিয়া অন্যান্য বালকগণ সেই পাঠ তাহার সঙ্গে সঙ্গে সমস্বরে পাঠ করিত। তার পর দাঁড়াইয়া চাণক্য শ্লোক সমস্বরে মুখস্থ বলিত। ইহাই ছিল সে কালের পল্লিগ্রামের লেখা পড়া শিক্ষার রীতি।"[১]

অর্থাৎ মৌখিক রীতিতে বাংলা প্রচল হলেও তাকে নিয়মানুগ ভাবে বিচার করে ভাষাশিক্ষা, ভাষার অভ্যন্তরীণ গঠন আয়ত্তীকরণের সুযোগ বা পরিস্থিতি কোনোটিই ছিল না। ছাত্ররা ব্যাকরণে ব্যুৎপত্তি অর্জন করতো, কিন্তু তা মূলত সংস্কৃত ব্যাকরণ। ফলে বয়স হাজার ছুঁলেও, নব্য ভারতীয় আর্যের অন্তর্ভুক্ত এই ভাষাটির ধ্বনিতাত্ত্বিক-রূপতাত্ত্বিক-বাক্যতাত্ত্বিক প্রাথমিক নির্দেশগুচ্ছের জন্য অপেক্ষা করতে হয়েছে আঠারো শতক পর্যন্ত।

আঠারো শতকে অবশ্য বাংলা ব্যাকরণের জন্য প্রাথমিকভাবে অ-বাংলাভাষী মানুষদের উপরই আমাদের ভরসা করতে হবে। পর্তুগীজরা অবশ্য এই বিষয়ে ইংরেজদের থেকে খানিক এগিয়ে থাকবেন। যদিও পর্তুগীজ পাদ্রী মানোয়াল দ্য আসুম্পসাঁউ[২](১৭৪৩) কিংবা নাথানিয়াল ব্রাসি হালেদের[৩](১৭৭৮) যে বাংলা ব্যাকরণের আমরা উল্লেখ পাই তার উদ্দেশ্য মূলত সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যাকরণ প্রণেতার স্বদেশীয়কে বাংলা ভাষা সম্বন্ধে একটি প্রাথমিক পরিচয় দান। হালেদের বইটির পরে লেবেদফের[৪] ব্যাকরণটিও মূলত চলিত হিন্দুস্থানী ভাষার পরিচায়ক। হালেদের পরবর্তী সময়ে কেরী'র[৫] বইটি এপ্রসঙ্গে উল্লেখের দাবি রাখে। এখানে তা নিয়ে বিশদে আলোচনার সুযোগ নেই। শুধু এইটুকু বলার যে মানোয়াল থেকে কেরী -এনাদের ব্যাকরণ নির্মাণে বাঙালির জন্য বাংলা ব্যাকরণ শেখার কোনও উপায় রাখা ছিল না। সেই সুযোগ প্রথম এলো এক বাঙালির হাত ধরেই,

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১৮২১-এ। বাঙালির জন্য নিয়মানুগভাবে বাংলা শেখানোর ব্যবস্থা করলেন স্কুল বুক সোসাইটির প্রথম নেটিভ সেক্রেটারি, রাধাকান্ত দেব[৬]। বইয়ের নাম *বাঙ্গালা শিক্ষাগ্রন্থ*, প্রকাশকাল ১৮২১। এরপর ১৮২৭-এ বইটির একটি সংক্ষিপ্ত সংস্করণ হয়, *সংক্ষিপ্ত বাঙ্গালা শিক্ষাগ্রন্থ*। এই বইটিকে সামনে রেখে দেখা যেতে পারে কেমনভাবে রাধাকান্ত দেশীয় পাঠশালার ছাত্রকে বাংলা ভাষা শিক্ষায় পরিচালনা করবেন।

১৮২৭ এর বইটির আখ্যাপত্রে বলা আছে 'নানা বিষয়ক পাঠাদি যুক্ত'; যা থেকে প্রাথমিকভাবে লেখকের আগ্রহ স্পষ্ট। আমাদের টেক্সটটির অধ্যায় বিভাজনের মধ্যে ব্যাকরণ কেন্দ্রিক অংশ (যা মূলত ধ্বনি উচ্চারণ ও প্রয়োগ সংক্রান্ত), শব্দ নির্মাণের নানান বিভাগ, ভৌগলিক তথ্য, উচ্চারণগত স্থান অনুসারী ধ্বনির স্থান নির্ণয়, কাল বা সময় সংক্রান্ত ধারনা, ইতিহাস সংক্রান্ত ধারনা, জলবায়ু সংক্রান্ত সাধারণ আলোচনা, সাধারণ সংখ্যা ও ক্রমাঙ্ক, সমোচ্চারিত ধ্বনি ও অর্থ নির্মাণে উচ্চারণ ভেদ, রাজ ইতিহাস বর্ণন- মোটের উপর এই হচ্ছে ভাগ। নির্ঘন্টের প্রথমেই স্বরধ্বনি ও ব্যঞ্জনধ্বনিকে (অচ্ ও হল্) পৃথক করেছেন তিনি। এই পৃথকীকরণের ক্ষেত্রে অচ্ ও হল্ বর্গীকরণ তিনি মূলত পাণিনির থেকে গ্রহণ করেছেন। পাণিনি তাঁর *অষ্টাধ্যায়ী*-তে স্বর ও ব্যঞ্জনকে অচ্ ও হল্ এই দুটি শ্রেণিতে ভাগ করেছিলেন।[৭] অবশ্য হালেদ ও কেরির বইদুটি তাঁর সামনে উদাহরণ হিসেবে ছিল। কারণ কেরির বইয়েতেও ধ্বনি ভিত্তিক বাংলা বর্ণমালার একটা প্রাথমিক রূপ পাওয়া যাচ্ছে।[৮] অবশ্য এই যুগের সমস্ত ব্যাকরণই (হালেদ, কেরি, ইয়েটস, কীথ এবং রাধাকান্ত স্বয়ং) আসলে সংস্কৃত অনুসারী ব্যাকরণ। ফলে সংস্কৃত ব্যাকরণের মধ্যে স্বরধ্বনি ও ব্যঞ্জনধ্বনির যে বর্নানুক্রমিক ধারা আছে রাধাকান্তর বইয়েও সেই ধারাই অনুসৃত হয়েছে। পাণিনির বইয়ের শিবসূত্র ও প্রত্যাহার অংশে অচ্ ও হল্ শিরোনামে ব্যঞ্জনের যে ভাগ রয়েছে এই টেক্সটটিতেও সেই ভাগই অনুসৃত হয়েছে। যদিও আমাদের প্রাপ্ত টেক্সটে অচ্ ও হল্ অংশটি লুপ্ত। তাই রাধাকান্তর করা স্বর ও ব্যঞ্জনের (অচ্-হল্ শিরোনামে) তালিকাটির সম্বন্ধে জানা যায় না। যদিও বাকি টেক্সট-এ সর্বত্র স্বর ও ব্যঞ্জনের যে যে ধ্বনিগুলি তিনি নানা স্থানে ব্যবহার করেছেন পাণিনির তালিকার থেকে তার কোনো ব্যতয়, বিচ্যুতি বা সংযোজন দেখা যায় না। ফলে রাধাকান্ত যে অচ্ ও হল্ –এর তালিকায় হুবহু পাণিনিকেই অনুসরণ করেছেন তা অনুমান করতে দ্বিধা নেই। নির্মল দাশ প্রশ্ন তুলেছেন যে রাধাকান্তর বইটিকে আদৌ ব্যাকরণ বই বলা যেতে পারে কিনা। আমরা শুরুতে এর উত্তর দেওয়ার খানিক চেষ্টা করেছি। পরে আবার যথাস্থানে এই আলোচনায় আসা যাবে। আপাতত রাধাকান্তর বইয়ের পর্যায়ক্রমিক ভাগগুলি নির্ঘন্ট অনুসারে বোঝার চেষ্টা করা যেতে পারে।

অচ্ ও হল্ –এর পরে বানান অংশে স্বরধ্বনি চিহ্ন সহ ব্যঞ্জনের উপস্থাপনা। এপ্রসঙ্গে স্মরণ রাখতে হবে, পুরনো বাংলা লিপিতে আমাদের চেনা অনুস্বর এর (ং) চিহ্নটি ছিল '০'। যেমন, 'অংশ' লেখা হতো 'অ০শ' হিসেবে। 'ফলা' অংশে তিনি য-ফলা, র- ফলা, ন-ফলা, ল-ফলা, ব-ফলা,ম-ফলা, ঋ- ফলা, ৯-ফলা ও রেফ কে ব্যবহার করে দেখিয়েছেন। এর মধ্যে ৯ বর্তমানে ব্যবহার হয় না। অন্যদিকে ফলাগুলির চিহ্ন সহযোগে যে ব্যঞ্জন দ্বিত্ব তৈরি হয়েছে তা সবগুলিই যে বাংলা শব্দের ক্ষেত্রে ব্যবহার করা সম্ভব, তাও বোধহয় নয়। বর্তমানে তো বটেই, এমনকি রাধাকান্তর সময়েও এর সবকটি ব্যবহারযোগ্য ছিল বলে মনে হয় না। এরপর যুক্তাক্ষর ত্র্যক্ষর এর একটি তালিকা করছেন তিনি। যেমন গ্ল, স্ক, স্ব, গ্বৃ, ক্ক্য, ল্ক্য, স্থ্য, ন্ম্র প্রভৃতি। ত্র্যক্ষরের ক্ষেত্রে ঝ থ ফ ব ভ য র – এই ধ্বনিগুলির শীর্ষ অবস্থানে কোনো ত্র্যক্ষরের নির্মাণ তিনি করেন নি।

এরপর উচ্চারণ স্থানভেদে বর্ণসংস্থাপন। এই অংশে তিনি ধ্বনির উচ্চারণ স্থান অনুযায়ী বাংলার স্বর ও ব্যঞ্জন ধ্বনিগুলির একটি বর্গীকরণ করছেন। এই বর্গীকরণের ক্ষেত্রে বিশেষ নতুন ভাবনার পরিচয় নেই, মূলত তা পাণিনি অনুসৃত। এই প্রসঙ্গে আমরা হরপ্রসাদ শাস্ত্রীর 'বাঙ্গালা ব্যাকরণ' প্রবন্ধটির কাছে আর একবার যেতে চাইবো যেখানে তিনি বলছেন –

"... বাঙ্গালা ব্যাকরণের প্রথমেই শব্দের উচ্চারণস্থান ও নিয়ম বলিয়া একটি অধ্যায় আছে; কিন্তু এ অধ্যায়ের কিছুই প্রয়োজন নাই। সংস্কৃত ব্যাকরণে এ অধ্যায়টি নহিলে চলে না,কারণ তাহাতে সবর্ণ ও অসবর্ণ ভেদের

প্রয়োজন; সেই জন্য বোপদেব বর্ণের উচ্চারণস্থান দিয়া বলিলেন, 'এষাং ষো যেন সমঃ স তস্য তত্র ততঃ'। কিন্তু বাঙ্গালা ব্যাকরণে কোথায়ও সবর্ণ শব্দেরও প্রয়োগ দেখি না। অথচ উচ্চারণস্থান সম্বন্ধে মুগ্ধবোধকে অনেকদূর ছাড়াইয়া গিয়াছে; মুগ্ধবোধে স্বল্পপ্রাণ ও মহাপ্রাণের, অন্তস্থঃ স্পর্শ উষ্ম প্রভৃতির উল্লেখ নাই। বাঙ্গালা ব্যাকরণে এ-সকল না থাকিলে এ অধ্যায়ই হয় না...বাঙ্গালা ব্যাকরণকারের...অনেক সময় অনেক কৌতুককর ব্যাপারের অবতারণা করিয়াছেন। একজন লিখিয়াছেন, শ ষ স এবং হ উষ্মবর্ণ,কারণ এইসকল বর্ণের উচ্চারণ কালে মুখ দিয়া গরম বাতাস নির্গত হয়।...আমরা বলি বাঙ্গালা ব্যাকরণে এ অধ্যায়টি রাখিবার কোনো প্রয়োজন নাই। সপ্তমবর্ষীয় বালকেরা শিক্ষকের শাণিত বেত্রাঘাতে এ অধ্যায়টি অতি কষ্টে মুখস্থ করে; কিন্তু ব্যাকরণের কোথায়ও ইহার একটা প্রয়োগও পায় না।”[৯]

হরপ্রসাদের মত অনুসারে এই অংশটি অতিরিক্ত, এর প্রয়োজন নেই। কিন্তু বাঙালি ছাত্রকে ‘শুদ্ধ’ বাংলা লিখতে পড়তে শেখানো যাঁর উদেশ্য, ধ্বনির এই শুদ্ধ বিভাজন ছাত্রদের শেখাতে তিনি আগ্রহী থাকবেন এটাই স্বাভাবিক। এখানে দেখার বিষয় এই যে কোন ধ্বনি বর্গীকরণে কোথায় স্থান পেল, কেন স্থান পেল?

এখানে পাঠক লক্ষ করেছেন নিশ্চিত যে স্বরধ্বনি প্রসঙ্গে রাধাকান্ত অ, ই, ঋ, ঌ, উ এই পাঁচটি স্বরের বর্গীকরণ করতে গিয়ে স্বরগুলি দুবার করে লিখেছেন। কিন্তু কেন? এইটে বোঝার জন্য আমাদের আরেকবার পাণিনির দ্বারস্থ হতে হবে। পাণিনির *অষ্টাধ্যায়ী* বোঝার জন্য আমরা ডেকান কলেজের Sumitra Mangesh Katre-র অনুবাদটি দেখেছি। পাণিনি কথিত অচ্-এর তালিকায় স্বরধ্বনি ন’টি- অ, ই, ঋ, ঌ, উ, এ, ঐ, ও, ঔ। পাণিনি তাঁর বৃদ্ধির সূত্রে বলছেন যে স্বর হ্রস্ব-দীর্ঘ-প্লুত ভেদে তিন প্রকার; আবার উদাত্ত-অনুদাত্ত-স্বরিত এবং অনুনাসিক-নিরনুনাসিক ভেদকেও স্বর ধারণ করে। Katre এই অংশটি ব্যাখ্যা করছেন এই ভাবে-
”long vowel class a (by 1.1.70 below) with supra-segmental features of their accents and +- nasality. Unmarked vowels by marker T stand for their class, associated with the supra-segmental features of length (-3) short (hrasva), long (dirgha) and extra long or prolated (pluta) (1.2.27), and accent (-3) udatta ’high-pitched’, anudatta ‘low-pitched’ and svarita ‘rising and falling tone or circumflex’ (1.2.29-31), +- nasality.”[১০]
কিন্তু উদাত্ত-অনুদাত্ত-স্বরিত এই ভেদ বৈদিক ভাষায় প্রযোজ্য কারণ সেই ভাষা উচ্চারণে শ্বাসাঘাতের(Accent) একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা রয়েছে। নব্য ভারতীয় আর্যের অংশ হিসেবে বাংলা ভাষা সেই শ্বাসাঘাতের রীতিগুলিকে স্বাভাবিকভাবেই বর্জন করেছে। সেই কারণেই অ, ই, ঋ, ঌ, উ এই পাঁচটি স্বর উল্লেখের পর তাদের দীর্ঘ স্বরগুলি উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে, এবং তারপর তাদের প্লুত রূপটি এসেছে। এ, ঐ, ও, ঔ এই চারটি’র হ্রস্ব রূপ নেই। তাদের দীর্ঘের তালিকাভুক্ত করা হয়েছে। তারপর ছাত্রদের বুঝতে অসুবিধা হতে পারে বিবেচনায় পরে একটি হ্রস্ব-দীর্ঘ-পুলতের প্রায়োগিক উদাহরণ সহ বর্ণনা রয়েছে (অনন্তঃ বৃক্ষঃ ইত্যাদি) যাতে স্বর শুধু পড়ার জন্য শেখা নয়, প্রয়োগেও বুঝতে পারে পড়ুয়া। পাণিনি থাকছেন মাথার উপর, কিন্তু ভাষাশিক্ষার নতুন পদ্ধতিতে *মুগ্ধবোধে*-র গন্ডী ছাড়িয়ে ব্যবহারিক প্রয়োজন ক্রমশ গুরুত্বপূর্ণ হয়ে উঠছে। এই কাজ তাই আধুনিকতার চিহ্ন হিসেবেও বিশেষ পাঠের দাবিদার।

বর্ণসংস্থাপনের ক্ষেত্রে পাণিনির অনুগামী হলেও পাণিনির সমস্ত নির্দেশ যে তিনি হুবহু মানছেন, তা মনে হয় না। পাণিনির মতে অ, ই, উ, ঋ, ঌ, এ, ঐ, ও, ঔ – এই নয়টি স্বরবর্ণ বা অচ্। পাঠক লক্ষ করবেন তালিকায় দীর্ঘস্বর ও ‘আ’ নেই। কারণ পাণিনির মতে প্রতিটি স্বরবর্ণ উচ্চারণ ভেদে হ্রস্ব-দীর্ঘ-প্লুত, ত্রিবিধ। এছাড়া উদাত্ত, অনুদাত্ত, স্বরিত, অনুনাসিক- নিয়নুনাসিক ইত্যাদি আরো নানা ভেদের কথা উল্লেখ করেছেন পাণিনি। ফলে আ হলো তাঁর মতে অ- এর দীর্ঘস্বর। এছাড়া প্লুতস্বর লেখার জন্যে দীর্ঘস্বরের পাশে ৩(তিন) লিখে তিন মাত্রা বিশিষ্ট প্লুত নির্দেশের কথা বলেছেন তিনি। রাধাকান্তের টেক্সটে কিন্তু বর্ণ সংস্থাপনের ক্ষেত্রে প্লুতস্বরগুলি শব্দের ব্যবহারের মধ্য দিয়ে বোঝানো হয়েছে। এবং সেখানে প্লুত মাত্রা চিহ্নক হিসেবে ‘৩’ এর

ব্যবহার নেই। আমাদের ধারণা ছাত্র ও শিক্ষক নির্বিশেষে পাঠককে খানিক সহজ করে পাণিনির সূত্র পেশ করার অভিপ্রায়েই এই পরিবর্তন। ছাত্রকে শেখাতে প্রয়োজন উদাহরণ; নাহলে তা গলাধঃকরণ হয়ে যায় (স্মর্তব্য হরপ্রসাদের সপ্তম বর্ষীয় বালকেরা ...ইত্যাদি)। প্রয়োগ, এই শব্দটি রাধাকান্তের কাছে খুব জরুরি। কারণ তাকে সেই ছাত্রদের জন্যে লিখতে হচ্ছে যারা মূলত দেশীয় শিক্ষা রীতির মধ্যে নিজেদের তৈরি করছে। ফলে পাণিনির অনুসরণ হলেও তার সাধারণ ছাত্রবোধ্য রূপটি রাধাকান্ত নিজেই তৈরি করেন। উচ্চারণ স্থান অনুযায়ী বর্ণসংস্থাপনেও একই ঘটনা ঘটে। যেখানে পাণিনি কৃত একাধিক উচ্চারণ বর্গের মধ্যে তিনি প্রয়োজনীয় অংশটুকুই গ্রহণ করছেন। উল্লেখ্য, এই 'প্রয়োজনীয়'র বৃত্তটি রাধাকান্ত নিজেই নির্মাণ করছেন। অর্থাৎ উচ্চারণের একাধিক বাগযন্ত্র ভিত্তিক স্থান প্রাচীন বৈয়াকরণরা উল্লেখ করলেও এই টেক্সটে আমরা কণ্ঠ্য-তালব্য-মূর্ধণ্য, দন্ত্য-ওষ্ঠ্য-অনুনাসিক এই কটি উচ্চারণ স্থান দেখতে পাই।

যদিও পাণিনি অনুযায়ী দন্তমূলীয়, কণ্ঠ্য, তালব্য, দন্তৌষ্ঠ্য, জিহ্বামূলীয় প্রভৃতি বিভাগগুলি পাওয়া যায়। রাধাকান্ত খুব সম্ভবত সরলীকরণের উদ্দেশ্যেই এই ভাগগুলি উল্লেখ না করে তার নিকটবর্তী বর্গে সেই বর্ণকে সংস্থাপন করেছেন। যেমন 'এ' 'ঐ' পাণিনির মতে কণ্ঠ্য তালব্য ধ্বনি (এ দৈতোঃ কণ্ঠ তালুঃ)। রাধাকান্ত কণ্ঠ্য এবং তালব্য এই দুই বিভাগেই 'এ' 'ঐ'কে স্থান দিয়েছেন। প্রশ্ন তৈরি হতে পারে যে রাধাকান্তর উদ্দিষ্ট পড়ুয়া পাঠককে শেখানোই যেখানে মূল উদ্দেশ্য সেখানে পড়ুয়া কি খানিক ভুল শিখছে না? আসলে পাণিনিকে সম্পূর্ণত অনুসরণ করলে তা সাধারণ পাঠশালাগামী ছাত্রের বোধগম্যতার নিরিখে যে বেশ কঠিন হতো, তা বলা বাহুল্য। রাধাকান্তর উদ্দেশ্য পড়ুয়া যাতে শেখে ; সেইসঙ্গে হয়তো তাদের মধ্যে খানিক প্রশ্ন তৈরির পরিসরও তৈরি করেন লেখক। পড়ুয়ার মধ্যে পরবর্তীকালে, একই বর্ণ দুটি উচ্চারণ স্থানে কেন উচ্চারিত হবে এই প্রশ্ন তৈরি হলে, তার উত্তরে কণ্ঠ-তালব্য বর্গ নিয়ে উপস্থিত হবেন পাণিনি। কিশোর পড়ুয়া যখন আরো বৃহৎ জায়গায় পড়তে যাবে তখন তার মধ্যে এই বিতর্ক সমাধার রাস্তা তৈরি হবে বলেই হয়তো রাধাকান্ত এই বিতর্ককে জিইয়ে রাখতে চান। একই ভাবে 'ব' দন্তোষ্ঠ্য (বকারস্য দন্তোষ্ঠম), 'ও''ঔ' কণ্ঠ্যোষ্ঠ (ও দৌতোঃ কণ্ঠ্যোষ্ঠম) হওয়ায় তাদের বর্ননার ক্ষেত্রে একই পথ নিয়েছেন লেখক। পাণিনি উল্লিখিত যমবর্ণের উপস্থিতিকেই সম্পূর্ণ অস্বীকার করা হয়েছে। এই সিদ্ধান্ত থেকে একটি সম্ভাবনাও উঁকি দেয়; তবে কি রাধাকান্ত বাংলা ভাষার একটি স্বতন্ত্র ধ্বনি-প্যাটার্ন তৈরির কথা ভাবছিলেন? তার উচ্চারণ অনুসারে বর্ণস্থাপনের বর্গ নির্মাণ সেই সম্ভাবনাকে আরো জোরদার করে। কারণ বাংলা ভাষা শিক্ষা অভিলাষী ছাত্র বাংলা শেখার জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় বাংলা বর্ণ জানবে, তা লিখতে শিখবে, এইই তাঁর প্রত্যাশা। সেই প্রত্যাশা পূরণে দেশজ শিক্ষারীতির সমর্থক রাধাকান্ত সমাজের সামনে যে আইকনিক কাঠামো রাখবেন, তা যে পাণিনি হবেন, তাও পূর্বনির্দিষ্ট। মাথায় রাখতে হবে, পরবর্তীকালে মান্য বাংলা শেখার প্রথম সার্থক পাঠ্য টেক্সট *বর্ণপরিচয়ে*-র লেখকও কিন্তু পাণিনিকেই ভাষার আদর্শ নির্মাণ প্রকৌশলী হিসেবে সামনে রাখবেন। তাই স্বরধ্বনিতে ঋ, ৯ থাকলেও কিংবা আ-কে পৃথক স্বর হিসেবে বিবেচনা না করে 'অ' এর দীর্ঘ রূপ হিসেবে নির্দিষ্ট করা ওরিয়ান্টেলিস্ট রাধাকান্তর কাছে প্রত্যাশিতই। কিন্তু হুবহু পাণিনির অনুকরণ না করে, বাংলা যে একটি পৃথক ভাষা তা চিহ্নিত করা এবং সেই অনুযায়ী পদক্ষেপ করাও কম কৃতিত্বের নয়।

রাধাকান্তের টেক্সটির যে পর্যায়ভাগের কথা আমরা এই সংক্রান্ত আলোচনার শুরুতেই বলেছি, তার মধ্যে ব্যাকরণ সংক্রান্ত আলোচনায় বানানের জন্য আ-কার,ই-কার,ঈ-কার, উ-কার, ঊ-কার, এ-কার, ঐ-কার, ও-কার, ঔ-কারের প্রতিটি ব্যঞ্জনধ্বনিতে প্রয়োগ এবং মূলত ধ্বনি সংক্রান্ত আলোচনাই প্রাধান্য পেয়েছে। কিন্তু প্রশ্ন হলো যদি ব্যাকরণই লিখবেন রাধাকান্ত তাহলে শুধু ধ্বনি সংক্রান্ত আলোচনা করবেন কেন? এর আগে ১৮২১ এর বইয়ের সম্বন্ধে 'সমাচার দর্পণে' প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞাপনটির কথা আমরা উল্লেখ করেছি সেখানে এইটে দেখা যাচ্ছে যে, সন্ধি শব্দ ষট্ কারক অক্ষরের মূল (অর্থাৎ ধাতু) তদ্ধিত ও কৃদন্ত প্রত্যয়ের আলোচনা রয়েছে, ১৮২৭ এর বইয়ে পরিমার্জিত হয়ে সেসব বাদ পড়েছে। যদিও তাঁর শিক্ষাগ্রন্থের ছত্রে ছত্রে সংস্কৃত কাব্য ও ব্যাকরণের প্রভাব স্পষ্ট।

অথচ সেই রাধাকান্ত যখন দেশীয় ছাত্রকে বাংলা শেখাতে উদ্যত হলেন তখন কিসের জন্য প্রথমে রেখেও পরে বাদ দিয়ে দেন রূপতত্ত্বের গোটা এলাকা? অথচ ১৮২১-এই রাধাকান্তর বইয়ের পাশাপাশি হটনের *Rudiment of Bengali Grammer* প্রকাশিত হচ্ছে যেখানে কিন্তু কারক-বিভক্তি-উপসর্গ-অনুসর্গ-সন্ধিপ্রকরণ-প্রত্যয় সহ রূপতত্ত্বর ভরপুর আলোচনা রয়েছে। তাহলে কি বাংলা ভাষা শিখতে গেলে রূপতত্ত্বকে প্রয়োজনীয় নয় বলে মনে করছেন লেখক? নাকি অন্য কোনো উদ্দেশ্য আছে তাঁর? এই প্রশ্নের উত্তর খুঁজতে গিয়ে আমাদের নজর আটকে যায় বইটির আখ্যাপত্রে। যেখানে বাঙ্গালা শিক্ষাগ্রন্থ শিরোনামের ইংরাজি করছেন লেখক Bengali Spelling Book। 'শিক্ষা' কীভাবে spelling বা বানানের প্রতিশব্দ হয়ে উঠলো? নাকি এখানে spelling বলতে বানানের অতিরিক্ত কিছু বোঝানো হচ্ছে? বইটির অধ্যায় অনুযায়ী যে সামগ্রিক কাঠামো তা থেকে এটা পরিষ্কার যে এই বইটি একটি টিচিং-লার্নিং এর বই। শিক্ষক কীভাবে পড়াবেন, কী পড়াবেন এবং ছাত্রই বা কী পড়বে এই দুটিই লেখকের মুখ্য উদ্দেশ্য। এবং সেই উদ্দেশ্য সাধনে পড়ার পাশাপাশি লেখার একটা বড় এলাকা রয়েছে। রাধাকান্তর বইয়ের পাঠক বাংলা না-জানা সিভিলিয়ন নন; তাঁর পাঠক কথ্য রীতির বাংলাটি ইতিমধ্যেই জানেন। এবার প্রয়োজন তাকে লিখতে শেখানো। কীভাবে সে বাংলা লিখবে? যখন তার সামনে মান্য বাংলার কোনো নির্দিষ্ট ধাঁচা তৈরিই হয়নি। উনিশ শতকের দ্বিতীয় দশকে বাংলার পাঠশালায় যে বাঙালি ছাত্র পড়ছে, সে বাংলা গদ্য বলতে জানে পূর্বপুরুষের করা দলিল মুসাবিদার বাংলা; ডানকান, ফরস্টার প্রমুখদের হাতে সেই বাংলার কাঠামো নির্মিত।[৩৮] আর বড়জোর সে ঐতিহাসিক ভাবে জানতে পারে ফোর্ট উইলিয়ামের পণ্ডিতি গদ্য, যা সংস্কৃতের অনুসরণ করতে গিয়ে নিজেই হয়ে গিয়েছে প্রায় পুনরায় অনুবাদযোগ্য বাংলা। ফলে বলতে পারলেও লেখার ক্ষেত্রে সমস্যা বিস্তর। কিন্তু বাক্যের গঠনে যে কর্তা-কর্ম-ক্রিয়া সংগঠন সেই সংক্রান্ত কোনো আলোচনায় যাননি লেখক। কারণ তিনি তাঁর পাঠশালার শিক্ষার্থীকে ব্যাকরণের সেই অংশটিই বলতে চান যা শিখে শিক্ষার্থী সংস্কৃত ও ফার্সির বেড়া টপকে স্বচ্ছন্দে বাংলা লিখবে। সেই বাংলায় তৎসম শব্দের ব্যবহার কিংবা সাধু(শিষ্টার্থে) ক্রিয়াপদের ব্যবহার থাকতে পারে, কিন্তু তা কোনো ভাবেই ফার্সি বোঝাই আইন আদালতের বাংলা নয়, আবার ফোর্ট উইলিয়ামের সিভিলিয়ানদের জন্য প্রায় সংস্কৃতে লেখা বাংলা নয়। সেই বাংলা হবে বাঙালি শিক্ষার্থীর পক্ষে আদর্শ লেখার ভাষা; যা লেখার জন্য বাঙালি ছাত্রকে ভাষা-কাঠামোর অভ্যন্তরীণ স্তর জানতে হয় না। কারণ সে ইতিমধ্যেই জন্মাবধি সেই ভাষার কথ্য ধাঁচা জেনে গিয়েছে। এবার লেখার জন্য একটা শিষ্ট সাধু ভাষা নির্মাণ করছেন লেখক যা সাদৃশ্যের(analogy) মাধ্যমে পড়ুয়া রপ্ত করতে পারবে। রাধাকান্তর সময়ে চমস্কির বৈশ্বিক ব্যাকরণ (Universal Grammar) সুদূর ভবিষ্যতের গর্ভে, ভাষার আয়ত্তীকরণে Language Acquisition Devise(সংক্ষেপে LAD)-এর ভূমিকা জানা অসম্ভব, এমনকি স্যোসুর প্রবর্তিত এককালিক-দ্বিকালিক ভাষাবিজ্ঞান বা নিদেন পক্ষে ফিলোলজির চর্চা শুরুর জন্য আমাদের অপেক্ষা করতে হবে উনিশ শতকের শেষাবধি। এই সব কিছুর সাহায্য ছাড়া সাধারণ কাণ্ডজ্ঞানের ভিত্তিতে কীভাবে শিক্ষার্থীর জন্য ভাষা শিক্ষার বই লেখা যায়, এ বিষয়ে রাধাকান্তর এই প্রকল্প নির্দ্বিধায় প্রশংসার্হ।

শব্দ নির্মাণ

রাধাকান্তর বইয়ের একটি বৃহৎ অংশ হচ্ছে নানাবিধ স্বর-ব্যঞ্জনের সম্ভাব্য প্রয়োগে শব্দ নির্মাণ। আমাদের মাথায় রাখতে হবে একই সঙ্গে পড়া এবং লেখার প্রক্রিয়াকে চালাতে চাইছেন লেখক। পাঠশালার পড়ুয়ারা মূলত মনে রাখার জন্য, যে ক্রমে পড়তে লিখতে পারে, তার একটা সম্ভাব্য রূপরেখা তৈরি করছেন তিনি। তাই শব্দ নির্মাণ অধ্যায়ের শেষেই আসে 'পড়িবার পাঠ' অংশ। যেখানে নানাবিধ শব্দের নির্মাণ কৌশলের পরেই আসে "অতঃপর-আবার কর-ইহ ভব-ঈশ জপ" ইত্যাদি পাঠের অংশ। প্রায়োগিক ক্ষেত্রের উদাহরণে মনে রাখার পাশাপাশি ঈশ্বরে আস্থাভাজন হোক পড়ুয়ারা, তাও চান লেখক। অবশ্য এই চাওয়া আমরা পরে আরো সুনির্দিষ্ট ভাবে দেখতে পাব। নীতিশিক্ষার অংশটি আসার আগেই পড়ুয়ারা ঈশ্বরে আস্থাশীল হচ্ছে, শিখছে অর্থ সমস্ত অনিষ্টের মূলে ('ধন মদ' সম)। লেখকের সামগ্রিক প্রকল্পের পরিকল্পনায় শিষ্ট ভাষা

শেখানোর পাশাপাশি নীতিশিক্ষায় আগ্রহ, শুরু থেকেই তা স্পষ্ট। এই অংশে পাঠককে আমরা পড়ার ছন্দ লক্ষ করতে অনুরোধ করবো। যেমন "ফল ধর বধ কর ভব তর মন রত"। কিংবা ধরা যাক "শত দল ষট্ পদ সৎ পথ হত নর"। এই ছন্দের মধ্যে চার মাত্রার একটা দুলুনি রয়েছে, যা পড়ুয়ার মনে রাখার জন্য সুবিধেজনক। শব্দ নির্মাণের ক্ষেত্রে সম্ভাব্য প্রায় সমস্ত জোড়কে প্রস্তাব করেছেন লেখক। তাতে অধিকাংশ শব্দ অর্থবিযুক্ত, সন্দেহ নেই। কিন্তু এই অংশে অর্থযুক্ত শব্দ শেখানো লেখকের একমাত্র উদ্দেশ্য নয়। প্রাথমিক ভাবে শব্দের নির্মাণে যে ধ্বনি বা ধ্বনিগুচ্ছ ব্যবহৃত হয়, তাকে চেনাতে চাইছেন পাঠকের কাছে। ধ্বনি সংস্থাপনের মাধ্যমে সম্ভাব্য ধ্বনি খণ্ডগুলিকে বিভিন্ন বর্গের অন্তর্ভুক্ত করা হয়েছে। শীর্ষ নাম গুলি লক্ষণীয়- সর্বস্বরান্ত দ্ব্যক্ষর, যুক্ত বর্ণান্ত দ্ব্যক্ষর, যুক্ত বর্ণাদি দ্ব্যক্ষর, আদ্যন্ত যুক্তবর্ণ দ্ব্যক্ষর, স্বরান্ত ত্র্যক্ষর, স্বরান্ত চতুরক্ষর, স্বরান্ত পঞ্চাক্ষর ইত্যাদি। এর মধ্যে অধিকাংশ শব্দই তৎসম অথবা তৎভব। কিন্তু সাধারণের প্রাত্যহিক ভাষায় ব্যবহৃত বেশ কিছু দেশি শব্দ এই তালিকায় এসেছে; যেমন- গাড়ু, লুচি, ঝাড়ু, ঘুঘু, থাবা, গণ্ডা, প্রভৃতি। অর্থাৎ শিষ্ট লিখিত ভাষা নির্মাণের উদ্দেশ্যে সংস্কৃতের পাশাপাশি দেশজ শব্দভাণ্ডারে লেখক আগ্রহী, বেশ বোঝা যাচ্ছে।

'পড়িবার পাঠ' শেষ হয় জ-কার ণ-কার ষ-কার স-কার উচ্চারণভেদে। ১৮২১ এর টেক্সটে ষত্ব-ণত্ব বিধান ছিল, আমাদের আলোচনায় পূর্ব উল্লেখিত সমাচার দর্পণের বিজ্ঞাপনে তা দেখেছি। ১৮২৭ এর টেক্সটে ণত্ব-বিধি ষত্ব-বিধির জটিল নিয়মকে সহজভাবে উদাহরণ হিসেবে শব্দের সঙ্গে মাধ্যমে উপস্থাপিত করা হয়েছে। এরপর সমোচ্চারিত ভিন্নার্থক শব্দ ও প্রায়-সমোচ্চারিত ভিন্নার্থক শব্দের একটি তালিকা পাওয়া যায়, সেখানে যথাক্রমে ২১ জোড়া ও ১৫ জোড়া শব্দ অর্থসহ উপস্থিত। এর পাশাপাশি সংস্কৃত সমোচ্চারিত ভিন্নার্থক শব্দের একটি পৃথক তালিকাও প্রস্তুত করেছেন লেখক। তা থেকে প্রশ্ন তৈরি হয়, তবে কি রাধাকান্তর চিন্তায় পৃথক বাংলা শব্দের তালিকার কোনো পরিকল্পনা ছিল? কারণ আগের তালিকা দুটিতে তৎসম ও তদ্ভব শব্দ রয়েছে। ফলে পৃথকভাবে ১০ জোড়া সংস্কৃত শব্দের (যা বাংলায় তৎসম শব্দ হিসেবেই ব্যবহৃত) প্রয়োজন হলো কেন? লেখক কি কোথাও তাহলে পড়ুয়াকে বাংলা (তৎসম শব্দসহ) ও সংস্কৃত'র ফারাক বোঝাতে চাইছেন শব্দভান্ডারের উদাহরণে?

আলোচনার শুরুতে আমরা বলেছিলাম বাংলা ভাষা শিক্ষা এবং শিষ্ট ভাষা লিখতে শেখার ক্ষেত্রে রাধাকান্তর এই টেক্সটের একটা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা আছে। গোটা টেক্সটের আলোচনার শেষে সেই ভূমিকার কিয়দংশ পাঠকের কাছে হাজির করতে পেরেছি, আশা রাখি। নির্মলবাবু বলেছিলেন, রাধাকান্তর বইটি পূর্ণাঙ্গ ব্যাকরণ নয়। ১৮২৭-এ অর্থাৎ আমাদের এই টেক্সটটির ক্ষেত্রে আমরা তাঁর সঙ্গে সহমত। ধ্বনি সংক্রান্ত আলোচনা ছাড়া রূপতত্ত্ব বা বাক্যতত্ত্বের কোনো দিক এখানে আলোচনায় আসেনি। আমরা বলেছি, লেখার প্রয়োজনে যেটুকু শেখা প্রয়োজন, ততটুকুই শেখাতে চাইছেন লেখক। ব্যাকরণ লেখার জন্য যে মাপকাঠি বেঁধেছিলেন সংস্কৃত বৈয়াকরণরা, ধ্বনিকে বুঝতে, তাদের সেই মাপের শরণাপন্ন হলেও রূপতত্ত্বের এলাকাকে ১৮২৭ এর টেক্সটে স্বেচ্ছায় বাতিল করলেন লেখক। ব্যাকরণ পূর্ণাঙ্গ কি না,এই বিতর্ক আপাত মুলতুবি রেখে, পাঠককে আমরা লক্ষ করতে বলবো, এই প্রথম বাংলা ব্যাকরণকে প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক বিদ্যাচর্চার মধ্যে ঢোকানো হচ্ছে। অর্থাৎ ব্যাকরণ বলতেই যে আজ আমাদের চোখের সামনে স্কুল-পাঠ্য বইয়ের একটি ছবি ভেসে ওঠে, রাধাকান্তর হাতে সেই ছবি তৈরির কাজে প্রথম তুলির টান পড়েছিল বলা চলে। এর আগে পাঠশালায় ব্যাকরণচর্চা হলেও তা যে মূলত সংস্কৃত ব্যাকরণ, আমরা আগেই বলেছি। স্বতন্ত্র ভাষা বাংলা; রাধাকান্তের নিজের ভাষায় 'সংস্কৃত ও প্রাকৃত' থেকে যার জন্ম। সংস্কৃত প্রভাব মুক্ত নন কোনো ভাবেই, তবু সেই স্বতন্ত্র ভাষার নিজস্ব ব্যাকরণ লেখার চেষ্টা করছেন তিনি; শুধু এইটুকু আগ্রহকে বুঝতে চাইছি আমরা।

তথ্যসূত্র

মজুমদার, কেদারনাথ। *বাঙ্গালা সাময়িক সাহিত্য*, প্রথম খণ্ড, Research House, Mymensingh, জুলাই ১৯১৭, পৃঃ- ৭০।

আব্রাহাম জর্জ গ্রীয়ার্সন ১৯০৩ এ প্রকাশিত Linguistics Survey of India-র পঞ্চম খন্ডে হালেদের পূর্ব সময়ে একখানি পর্তুগীজ অভিধানের উল্লেখ করেন। এখানেই প্রথম আমরা মানোয়েল দ্য আসুম্পসাঁউইয়ের উল্লেখ পাই। ১৯২২ এ লন্ডন থেকে ফেরার সময় সুনীতিবাবু বইটির ব্যাকরণ অংশ ও শব্দ সংগ্রহের খানিকটা নকল করে নিয়ে আসেন। দেশে ফিরে প্রিয়রঞ্জন সেনের সাহায্যে তিনি বইটির পর্তুগিজ অংশটি অনুবাদ করে সেই অনুলিখিত অংশটি সম্পাদনা করে কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় থেকে প্রকাশ করেন। আখ্যাপত্র থেকে জানা যায় বইটির নাম *Vocabulario em idioma Bengalla e Portuguez divido em duas partes*; প্রকাশকাল ১৭৪৩।

১৭৭৮ এ হালেদের *Grammar of the Bengal language* বইটি আসে। হালেদের ব্যাকরণ পৃথকভাবে নিখিল সরকার (শ্রীপান্থ), অধ্যাপক অমিত্রসূদন ভট্টাচার্য ও নিখিলেশ চক্রবর্তী, অধ্যাপক পবিত্র সরকার প্রমুখেরা সম্পাদনা করেছেন। হালেদ নিয়ে প্রাপ্ততথ্য ইতিমধ্যে সংকলিত। মানোয়ালের ব্যাকরণের তুলনায় হালেদের রচনা অনেক বেশি আধুনিক; মানোয়ালের লেখায় যে নানাবিধ সীমাবদ্ধতা ছিল, তা সুনীতিবাবুর সম্পাদিত বইটির ভূমিকাতে স্পষ্ট। হালেদে এই সীমাবদ্ধতা অনুপস্থিত। হালেদের ব্যাকরণ প্রস্তাব অনেক বেশি পারম্পর্য যুক্ত। ১৮০১ এ উইলিয়ম কেরির ব্যাকরণ বইটির আগে পর্যন্ত ইংরেজ সিভিলিয়নদের বঙ্গভাষা চর্চার ক্ষেত্রটি মজবুত করতে হালেদই যে ব্যবহৃত হতো তা প্রথম যুগের ব্যাকরণ রচয়িতাদের নিয়ে বিশেষজ্ঞদের চর্চায় প্রমাণিত।

রুশ পর্যটক হেরাসিম লেবেদফ আঠারো শতকের শেষদিকে প্রথমে মাদ্রাজ ও পরে ১৭৮৭ সালে কলকাতায় আসেন। কলকাতায় এসে সাধারণ রঙ্গমঞ্চ প্রতিষ্ঠার ক্ষেত্রে তাঁর প্রয়াস সর্বজনবিদিত। তিনি দেশীয় শিক্ষকের সাহায্যে এদেশীয় ভাষা আয়ত্ত করেন এবং *Grammar of the Pure and Mixed East Indian Dialects* নামে একটি ব্যাকরণ রচনা করেন।

উপনিবেশ নির্মিত যে বিদ্যাচর্চার পরিসর, তা শুরুর ক্ষেত্রে ফোর্ট উইলিয়মের অবদান সন্দেহাতীত। প্রাথমিক ভাবে সেই বিদ্যায়তনিক চর্চার হাত ধরে বাংলা ব্যাকরণের প্রয়োজনীয়তা দেখা দিয়েছিল। কলেজের অন্যতম মুখ্য বিদ্যানুসন্ধানী উইলিয়ম কেরি লিখলেন *A Grammar of Bengalee Language* (১৮০১)

শোভাবাজারের রাজা নবকৃষ্ণ দেবের ছেলে রাজা গোপীমোহন দেবের দত্তক সন্তান রাধাকান্ত দেব। শ্যামলেন্দু সেনগুপ্তের *A Conservative Hindu of Colonial India: Raja Radhakanta Deb and his Milieu (1784-1867), Navrang, New Delhi, 1990* আগ্রহীরা বইটি দেখতে পারেন। বইটিতে রাধাকান্ত'র জীবনের নানা দ্বন্দ্ব নির্মোহভাবে বোঝার চেষ্টা করেছেন শ্যামলেন্দু বাবু।

সংস্কৃত বৈয়াকরণ পাণিনির নাম সকলেই শুনেছেন। তাঁর বিখ্যাত বই *অষ্ট্যাধ্যায়ী*-তে স্বর ও ব্যঞ্জন ধ্বনির বর্গীকরণ করতে তিনি, অচ্ ও হল্ শব্দদুটি ব্যবহার করেন।

প্রসঙ্গত দ্রষ্টব্য Carey, W. *Grammer of the Bengalee Language*, the Mission Press, Serampore, 1801, p- 7-8.

দেবপ্রসাদ ভট্টাচার্য (সম্পাঃ)। *হরপ্রসাদ শাস্ত্রী রচনা সংগ্রহ দ্বিতীয় খণ্ড*, নাথ পাবলিশিং, কলকাতা, ডিসেম্বর ১৯৮১, পৃঃ- ৬০০-৬০১।

Katre, Sumitra Mangesh. Astadhyayi of Panini, First Indian Edition, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1989, P-7.

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Phonology Education to Beginners of French as a Foreign Language: Teachers' Practices, Perspectives and Challenges in Cross-linguistic Environment

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Teaching strategies

A B S T R A C T

Phonological competence is a central part of language acquisition in the beginners' foreign language classroom; phonology education is acquired through observation, imitation, and practice. Understanding and producing correct sounds and pronunciation is necessary for successful communication and language acquisition. We are particularly recognizing the impact of phonological education on the development of communicative skills. Through qualitative analysis of a survey with French language teachers, the study aims to gain insights into French teachers' perceptions, knowledge, and preferences regarding intelligible pronunciation attitudes, focusing on adopting phonology education. This article also emphasises how crucial textbook design is to improving pedagogical outcomes and improving learners' fluency. Additionally, the exploration of teachers' perceptions and challenges reveals a cross-linguistic environment that affects the phonology education of the learners from teachers. Finally, this paper highlights the existing practices to improve pronunciation of the French beginner learners which will provide a broad insight to the use of modern technologies in the classroom. A carefully designed survey instrument collected data from diverse participants, contributes to the understanding of phonology education in French as a foreign language and underscores the necessity for ongoing professional development and the creation of specialized materials to enhance pronunciation teaching. The insights gained from teachers' experiences provide valuable guidance for improving phonology education practices, ultimately aiding French beginner learners in achieving greater proficiency in French pronunciation.

1. Introduction

In the modern era of globalization, learning a foreign language has become increasingly significant and primordial to the present generation of ambitious learners who are obliged to communicate globally. Phonology education in foreign languages is key for learners to develop accurate pronunciation and comprehension. It involves studying the contrastive relationships among speech sounds and how they interact in the target language. Integrating phonetics, phonology, and pronunciation in language learning helps beginners to develop pronunciation skills and improve speaking abilities. The pedagogic disciplines addressed include the integration of phonology in language teaching and learning (IPLTL) and training and tutoring language learners (TTLL). On the other hand, phonology instruction facilitates vocabulary acquisition

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from which reading and writing skills are developed. It exposes the learners to the melody and rhythm of the language, which appreciate the cultural entities of the language (Moritz et al. 2013). With the lack of pronunciation instruction, beginner learners often face problems transferring from their mother tongue, such as mispronunciation of sounds and problems like rhythm, stress, and intonation of the target language (Luo, 2014). Early awareness of phonology boosts proper pronunciation habits from the beginning, eliminating errors from fossilizing. The complete language ability of a learner is improved by a strong phonological foundation that interacts with other linguistic components, such as grammar and syntax (Bowyer-Crane et al, 2008). More importantly, the learning environment may involve language teaching, the mixing of different languages within a text or communication medium, leading to language identification, translation, and understanding challenges. The term "cross-linguistic" signifies the interaction or overlap between different languages, highlighting the complexity and diversity of linguistic communication in such environments. In a study, Thomas (2020) explains that pronunciation teaching in a cross-linguistic environment requires teachers to understand learners' linguistic backgrounds and provide targeted instruction on phonemes, intonation patterns, and speech sounds. Therefore, the investigators explored the importance of phonology education more closely due to its significance in the language facilitators' perspectives and challenges.

1.2 Abbreviations and Acronyms:

FFL - French as a foreign language
IPLTL - The pedagogic disciplines addressed include the integration of phonology in language teaching and learning
TTLL - Training and tutoring language learners

2. Research Objectives

This article cites teachers' perspectives on phonology education for beginners and investigates the challenges teachers encounter while teaching phonology. The target language here is French; it explores the impacts of a cross-linguistic environment on phonology education, examines effective teaching strategies practiced by the teachers, which provide insights into pronunciation modelling in FFL classrooms, enhances instructor readiness to meet a variety of student requirements, and eventually helps novice learners acquire French phonological skills more successfully.

2.1 The Research questions pondered:

1. What are teachers' views on the importance and implementation of phonology education for beginners in French?
2. What challenges do teachers face in teaching phonology to beginners, and how do the challenges evolve to enhance the pronunciation of beginners?

By illuminating the experiences and difficulties teachers face. Enhancing phonological teaching can help students pronounce words correctly and communicate in French more successfully.

3. Literature review

3.1 Background of phonology education in French as a foreign language:

Phonology, a field of linguistics, has a protracted history dating back to the 19th century, with early linguists like De Saussure and Bloomfield establishing the importance of sounds. It gained recognition in the mid-20th century through Chomsky and Halle's Generative Phonology hypothesis. There have been many differences of opinion over the years about the role of pronunciation in language teaching and how it is beneficial to teach it. The grammar translation method and reading-based approaches have viewed pronunciation as irrelevant. In the direct method, pronunciation is very important. The target language presents pronunciation inductively and corrects through modelling. In the audio-lingual approach, the phonetic symbols were applied within an audio-lingual method, which provided repetitions, memorizations, and drills through audio media as it emphasized oral practices and listening comprehension. The Communicative Approach has existed since the 1980s. This approach holds that oral communication is the primary use of language. Thus, this approach includes phonological activities through role-plays, dialogues, and pronunciation games to allow the learners to use language naturally and effectively. Task-based learning involves associating language with physical actions. Phonological activities can include mimicking sounds and intonation while performing actions. The Silent Way encourages learners to discover pronunciation patterns independently. Teachers provide minimal guidance, allowing learners to explore the phonological aspects of the language on their own. The Natural Approach is based on language acquisition through immersion; learners are exposed to natural pronunciation and intonation patterns through extensive listening before speaking. Finally, in this technological era, many language learning apps and software use speech recognition technology to provide instant feedback on pronunciation. Learners can practice phonology through interactive exercises and games. Teaching pronunciation has developed to improve students' spoken language proficiency and communication capabilities. To improve pronunciation practice, technology integration, context-focused instruction, and the significance of suprasegmentals like stress, intonation, and rhythm are all essential. Teachers now focus on clear communication and deal with pronunciation issues based on students' unique language backgrounds. According to Morley (1991), effective oral competency-building exercises should be based on learners' actual circumstances since these will serve as the guiding principles of the present pronunciation pedagogy. The method for teaching pronunciation is shaped by research and pedagogical advances, allowing students to communicate verbally in a clearer, more understandable manner. Hişmanoğlu, M. (2006) explains that reflective pronunciation instruction has become more important in today's classrooms since teachers can evaluate their teaching strategies using videotaped or audiotaped lessons. Colleagues can offer feedback on the lesson's advantages and disadvantages and suggestions for a more effective presentation. Additionally, students can record themselves speaking and listen to the recordings to assess their pronunciation.

Methodology	**Place of Pronunciation**	**Description**
Grammar-Translation Method	Limited emphasis	Pronunciation is often overlooked as the primary focus is on translating and analysing grammatical structures.

Direct Method	Significant emphasis	The focus is on teaching language through immersion and natural conversation, giving importance to pronunciation.
Audio-Lingual Method	High emphasis	Priority is given to pronunciation: using repetitive drills and oral exercises to develop accurate speaking skills.
Communicative approach	Moderate emphasis	Integration of pronunciation in a meaningful context. To ensure learners can communicate effectively in the language.
Task-Based Language Teaching	Moderate emphasis	Pronunciation is incorporated when relevant to the task, supporting effective communication in real-life situations.

Table 1

4. Research Methodology:

In quest of comprehending the practices of French language phonology education in beginners' classrooms in a cross-linguistic environment, an explicit study was executed. The research focused on exploring the teachers' perspectives and the problems faced in improving the pronunciation of foreign language learners. This research was conducted by surveying ten French language teachers working in different educational institutions in Tamil Nadu using a structured questionnaire.

4.1 Participants of the Survey:

The participants in this study were six female and four male non-native speaker teachers of French aged between 25 and 45 years old. A combination of in-service teachers from colleges and schools were chosen as participants. They were all Tamil and Malayalam-speaking French language teachers employed in different educational institutions (Schools and Colleges) of Tamil Nadu. Most participants obtained a Master's degree in French, and few had graduation degrees in the same language, with added qualifications such as DELF certifications.

Participants	Gender	Degree	Mother Tongue	Books used in the language classroom
T1	Male	Masters degree	Tamil	Cosmopolite A1
T2	Male	Masters degree	Tamil	Nouvelle Génération

T3	Female	Masters degree	Malayalam	La classe A1
T4	Female	Under Graduation	Tamil	Nouvelle Génération
T5	Female	Masters degree	Malayalam	Entre Jeune
T6	Female	Masters degree	Tamil	Cosmopolite A1
T7	Female	Masters degree	Tamil	Nouvelle Génération
T8	Male	Under Graduation	Tamil	La classe A1
T9	Male	Masters degree	Malayalam	Cosmopolite A1
T10	Male	Under Graduation	Tamil	Nouvelle Génération

Table 2

As a part of this study, the survey was conducted through a questionnaire to the participants.

Following the specifications of the problems and hypotheses, the data were processed, examined, and interpreted.

5. Results and Discussion
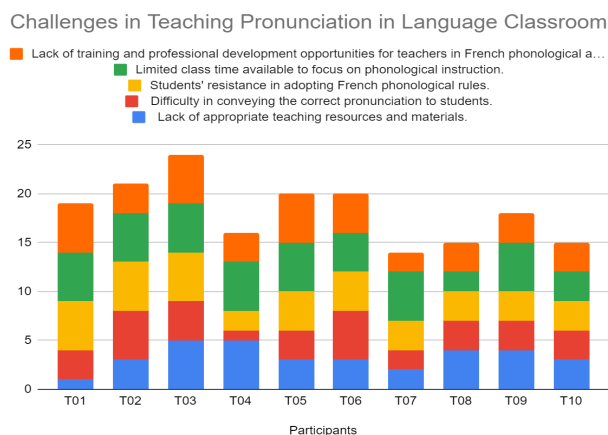
Figure 1: *Challenges*

This bar chart analyses French language teachers' challenges in Tamil Nadu and reveals several key issues in teaching phonology to beginners. The greatest and most common challenges include limited class time dedicated to phonological instruction and a lack of professional development opportunities, which were consistently rated highly by most participants. Instructors also mentioned that pupils frequently oppose embracing French phonological principles and have serious trouble communicating proper pronunciation. Furthermore, participants' degrees of access to relevant teaching tools and materials differed. To improve the efficacy of phonological education in French language instruction, addressing these issues calls for more specialized resources, greater time allotted in the curriculum, and more professional development for teachers.
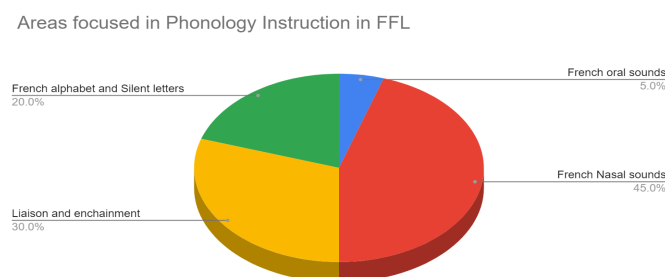
Figure 2: *Areas focused in French Phonology*

The pie chart titled "Areas focused in Phonology Instruction in FFL" illustrates the distribution of focus areas in phonology instruction for French as a Foreign Language (FFL). The data reveals that French nasal sounds receive the most attention, constituting 45% of the instructional focus. This is followed by liaison and enchainment, which account for 30%, indicating a significant emphasis on these aspects of French pronunciation. The French alphabet and silent letters also receive considerable attention, making up 20% of the focus. In contrast, French oral sounds receive the least focus, comprising only 5% of the instructional time. This distribution highlights the prioritization of certain phonological elements over others in the teaching of French to beginners.

5.1 Benefits of Phonology Education:

Teachers in the field of foreign language education emphasize the significant benefits of phonology education for learners. In foreign language instruction, the study of phonology improves intelligibility, promotes cultural integration, and advances pronouncing abilities. Gaining proficiency with phonological components improves communicative skills, assists learners relate to the target language community, and qualifies them to comprehend prosodic characteristics like intonation, rhythm, and stress. Contextualised phonology instruction improves language acquisition. Thus, the teacher participants of our study expressed the benefits of phonology education from their classroom observation.

	Benefits of Phonology education			
Participants	**Improved pronunciation**	**Enhanced listening skills**	**Increased confidence in speaking**	**Better understanding of native French speakers**
T01	Improved pronunciation	Enhanced listening skills	Increased confidence in speaking	Better understanding of native French speakers
T02	Improved pronunciation	Enhanced listening skills		Better understanding of native French speakers
T03	Improved pronunciation		Increased confidence in speaking	
T04	Improved pronunciation	Enhanced listening skills	Increased confidence in speaking	Better understanding of native French speakers
T05	Improved pronunciation		Increased confidence in speaking	
T06	Improved pronunciation	Enhanced listening skills	Increased confidence in speaking	Better understanding of native French speakers
T07	Improved pronunciation			Better understanding of native French speakers
T08	Improved pronunciation	Enhanced listening skills	Increased confidence in speaking	
T09	Improved pronunciation		Increased confidence in speaking	Better understanding of native French speakers
T10	Improved pronunciation	Enhanced listening skills	Increased confidence in speaking	Better understanding of native French speakers

Figure 3: *Benefits of Phonology Education*

The image is a table titled "Benefits of Phonology Education" and lists the benefits experienced by ten participants (T01 to T10). The benefits are categorized into four columns: "Improved pronunciation," "Enhanced listening skills," "Increased confidence in speaking," and "Better understanding of native French speakers." The participants are labelled in the first column.

Here's a detailed breakdown of the table:

Participants: Labelled from T01 to T10.

Improved Pronunciation: All participants (T01 to T10) have reported improved pronunciation.

Enhanced Listening Skill: Participants T01, T02, T04, T06, T08, and T10 have experienced enhanced listening skills, while T03, T05, T07, and T09 did not report this benefit.

Increased Confidence in Speaking: Participants T01, T03, T04, T05, T06, T08, T09, and T10 reported increased confidence in speaking. Participants T02 and T07 did not report this benefit.

Better Understanding of Native French Speakers: Most participants (T01, T02, T04, T06, T07, T09, and T10) reported a better understanding of native French speakers. Participants T03, T05, and T08 did not report this benefit.

The table visually illustrates which participants experienced specific benefits from phonology education, highlighting the widespread improvement in pronunciation among all participants.

5.2 Classroom Practices for Phonology Education:
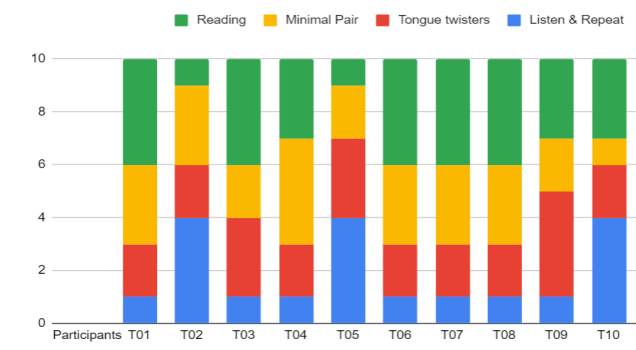
Figure 4: *Frequency of Classroom practices in Phonology Education*

A bar chart shows the frequency and distribution of classroom practices in phonology education among ten participants. Four distinct phonological exercises are represented by unique colours:

Green: Reading

Yellow: Minimal Pair

Red: Tongue Twisters

Blue: Listen & Repeat

Reading, Minimal Pair, Tongue Twisters, and Listen & Repeat. Reading is universally implemented, while Listen & Repeat is prominently featured. Minimal Pair is sporadic, reflecting variability in instructional strategies or individual learning preferences. Tongue Twisters are commonly employed, enhancing phonological proficiency through challenging articulation exercises. However, notable exceptions suggest differential adoption rates due to varying instructional focuses or learner capabilities. The chart highlights the complexity and variability in effective phonology education, offering insights into the nuanced application of various teaching methodologies.

In addition to our research, the investigators asked an open-ended question to the participants on

"*What are the other activities for beginners executed in French language classrooms?*"

The summarized responses are as follows:

The responses highlight various engaging and interactive methods to help students improve their pronunciation and understanding of French phonology.

i. Music and Podcasts

Music and podcasts are popular among teachers to enhance phonology education. Music can help students learn French pronunciation through catchy tunes and rhythms, while podcasts provide authentic listening practice with native speakers.

ii. Games and Puzzles
Games and puzzles are effective tools for making phonology education more engaging and interactive. Word games, such as crosswords or hangman, can help students practice vocabulary and pronunciation in a fun and competitive environment.
iii. Listening and Watching
Several teachers mentioned the importance of listening to and watching French content to improve phonology. Activities like learning French songs, listening to dialogues, watching videos, and observing native French speakers can help students familiarize themselves with the sounds and intonation of the language.
iv. Role-playing and Singing
Role-playing and singing are valuable activities for practising pronunciation and gaining confidence in speaking French. Role-plays allow students to apply their phonological knowledge in realistic scenarios while singing along to French songs helping them internalize the sounds and rhythms of the language.
v. Quizzes and Transcriptions
Quizzes and transcription exercises can be used to assess and reinforce students' phonological knowledge. Quizzes on words and transcriptions can help identify areas for improvement and provide feedback to students on their progress.

5.2 Role of French Manuals in the teaching of French Phonology in French language classrooms:

Mastering the sound system is essential for effective communication and comprehension. French phonology manuals and textbooks have traditionally played a central role in teaching this subject worldwide. These specialized teaching materials aim to provide learners with a systematic understanding of the French sound system, including the articulation and production of vowels, consonants, stress, rhythm, and intonation.

Over the past century, French phonology manuals have been developed, reflecting evolving linguistic research and pedagogical approaches. From early 20th-century classics like “Principes de Phonétique Française” to more contemporary works like “French Phonology and Morphology” and “A Handbook of French Phonetics”, these teaching resources have played a pivotal role in shaping how French pronunciation is learned and taught.

Whereas French has been taught as a foreign language in a cross-linguistic environment, the participants used the following books most recently in our survey methodical research. To bring a scholastic phonology education to beginners, we columned the phonology section in the following books “La Classe A1 (Nathan, 2019), Cosmopolite A1 (Antier, 2017), Génération A1 (Cocton, 2016)”

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
La classe A1	l’accent tonique, l’intonation	la liaison, les lettres finales de mots, le “h” muet	les sons /i/, /u/, /y/	Les sons /e/, /ɛ/, /ə/	Les Sons /ʒ/, /ʃ/	les voyelles nasales /ɛ̃/, /ɑ̃/		

Cosmopolite A1	l’alphabet, le son /y/, l’accent tonique, l’intonation, les lettres muettes, le son /z/ et la liaison	les sons /ɔ/, /e/, /ə/ , /a/, /z/ et /e/	les sons /e/, /ɛ/, les voyelles nasales /ɛ̃/, /ã//ɔ̃/	l’intonation, le sons /ø/, /ɔ̃/, /y/	Exercises à paratiquer, la prononciation des mots avec L’API	la voyelle nasale /ã/, les groupes consonatique	les sons /p/, /b/, /ɛ̃/, /ã/	les sons /j/, /ɔ/ /w/, /ɥ/
Génération A1	l’accent tonique	la liason, l’élision, l’intonation	les sons /ə/ , /e/, /ɛ/	les sons /u/, /y/	le son /ã/	le son /ɔ̃/		

Table 3: *French Manuals for teaching French with phonology included*

The differences in the phonological content of the three French language learning resources “La classe A1,” “Cosmopolite A1,” and “Génération A1”—highlight their unique approaches and areas of emphasis on French phonology.

5.4 Teachers’ Perspectives:

Teachers overwhelmingly recognize the importance of phonology education in helping learners achieve accurate pronunciation and effective communication skills. Apandi & Nor (2019) and Alshaboul (2018) inspected that the prospective teachers of French mostly recognize the IPA symbols to enhance reading. This acknowledgment is consistent with the high emphasis on pronunciation in methods such as the Direct Method and the Audio-Lingual Method, which prioritize oral skills through immersion and repetitive drills. Despite the recognized importance, implementation varies. Some teachers struggle to integrate phonology seamlessly into their lessons, often due to limited resources or institutional constraints. Teachers with a background in methods that de-emphasize pronunciation, such as the Grammar-Translation Method, might find it challenging to shift their instructional approach to focus more on phonology.

5.5 Challenges in Teaching Phonology:

The study identified several challenges teachers face when teaching phonology:

a. **Resource Limitations:** Many teachers report insufficient materials specifically designed for phonology instruction. While textbooks like “Cosmopolite A1” provide comprehensive content, they are not universally available or used.
b. **Learner Attitudes and Motivation:** Learners often find phonology challenging and may lack motivation to engage with pronunciation exercises, viewing them as less critical than other language skills.
c. **Teacher Training:** Not all teachers have received adequate training in phonology education, which affects their confidence and effectiveness in teaching this aspect of language.
d. **Time Constraints:** Integrating phonology into a packed curriculum can be difficult. Teachers must balance pronunciation practice with other linguistic competencies.

6. Conclusion

Phonology education is critical to teaching French as a Foreign Language, significantly impacting learners' pronunciation and overall communicative abilities. The benefits of phonology education are multifaceted. Improved pronunciation enhances learners' communicative competence and confidence. It also aids in better listening comprehension, as learners become more attuned to the phonetic nuances of the language. Teachers note that students with strong phonological skills tend to perform better in oral assessments and feel more confident in conversational settings.

Teachers recognize its importance but face challenges in resource availability, learner attitudes, lack of teacher training, and time constraints. Technical and non-technical tools, alongside well-designed French manuals, support effective phonology instruction. They point out that Manuals should be aptly selected for effective French language teaching. "Cosmopolite A1" stands out as a comprehensive resource for phonology education, while "La classe A1" and "Génération A1" provide solid foundational and structured approaches, respectively. Teachers utilize a range of tools to address these challenges. Teachers also integrate technical tools, which include language lab equipment, pronunciation software, and audio recordings; these offer learners' opportunities to practice and receive feedback on their pronunciation. Non-technical tools, such as tongue twisters, phonetic charts, and classroom activities focused on specific phonetic features, also play a significant role.

A combination of comprehensive resources, targeted training for teachers, and strategic integration into the curriculum is essential for effective phonology education. Addressing these areas will enhance the teaching and learning experience, leading to better pronunciation and greater confidence among beginners learning French.

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A Report for Language and Cultural Documentation: Reconnecting with the Bidayuh Language and the Tradition of the Last Ring Ladies in East Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This report, which aims to draw attention for language and cultural revival, discusses ways to revitalise the severely endangered Bidayuh language in Sarawak, Malaysia and to document the tradition of the last Bi'embhan ladies wearing ryuank'ng and rasunk'ng (gold-coloured copper rings).

Introduction

Located in Southeast Asia, Malaysia is a multilingual and multiethnic country consisting of Peninsular Malaysia and the Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak. Focusing on the state of Sarawak, there are six main ethnic communities—Iban, Bidayuh, Malay, Chinese, Melanau and Orang Ulu—and several other smaller ethnic communities—Indian, Kedayan, Javanese, Bugis and Murut. The Malaysian government officially recognised the Iban and Bidayuh indigenous communities as the Dayak people. There are also approximately 50 other indigenous communities; some still exist, while others may have become extinct.

The Bidayuh community (see Figure 1) is better known as the 'Land Dayak', a term meaning 'the Dayak of the hill country'. The community, which accounts for 7.81% of the state's population (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021), belongs to a subgroup of the western Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian language family (Adelaar, 2005). Most of the Bidayuhs live in the western end of Sarawak, known as the Bidayuh Belt, comprising three districts in the Kuching Division and one district in the Samarahan Division (Dundon, 1989). The Bidayuhs traditionally practised animism and greatly respected the land, mountains, forests and rivers. In the 19th century, they began converting to Christianity due to the influences of formal education and modern medicine in Sarawak. Consequently, they have adopted Christian names and celebrate Christian festivals.

The Bidayuhs were known for being reserved and observed a close-knit lifestyle, usually living together in longhouses built in mountainous areas. These mountains provided protection

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against attacks from the Sea Dayaks (Ibans) and offered rich resources for their hunting activities. They also built baruks (traditional round-shaped headhouses) that acted as lodging spaces for adolescent males and visitors and a venue for traditional ceremonies and handicraft production. In terms of occupation, the Bidayuhs were involved with hill paddy planting, an activity they regarded as part of their life and treated with care and respect. Today, many have shifted to planting cash crops, such as fruits, vegetables and pepper, and rearing animals to ensure a sustainable income.

Figure 1: *A Bidayuh couple in their ancestral village (Source: Nova Goh)*

The Bidayuhs speak the Bidayuh language, which consists of four main dialects and 29 sub-dialects, although none are mutually intelligible (Dealwis & David, 2007). The most common dialects are Bau-Jagoi (spoken in Bau District) and Biatah (spoken in Kuching District) (see Figure 2). Some residing in the upper areas of the Sadong River speak a different dialect from those living in the lower areas. Due to the high language diversity, the Bidayuh community has encountered many challenges in standardising their language, which poses a threat to its survival. In recent years, efforts have been made to ensure its development and revitalisation. For example, the Dayak Bidayuh National Association, with support from the Summer Institute of Linguistics, have established a unified orthography for the Bidayuh language vowels (Noeb & Ribu, 2017). In 2006, UNESCO and the Summer Institute of Linguistics conducted a pilot project to introduce the use of the Bidayuh language as the medium of instruction in kindergartens (Riget & Campbell, 2020). However, as funding dried up, the kindergartens had to rely on support from local communities to fund the teachers' remuneration and teaching materials.
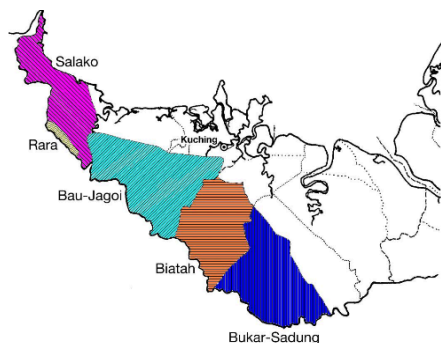
Figure 2: *Concentration of Bidayuh groups in Sarawak (Source: Joyik et al., n.d.)*

Today, factors such as rural-urban migration, intermarriage, language contact and prestige, formal (higher) education system and job opportunities have influenced many young Bidyuahs to move to Kuching, the capital city of Sarawak, and other major cities in Malaysia (Kayad & Ting, 2021; Norahim, 2010; Riget & Wang, 2016; Ting et al., in press). As they live far away from their ancestral village, they rarely (if ever) speak the Bidayuh language. This shift has also resulted in them no longer practising the Bidayuh tradition. Hence, the thought-provoking questions to ask are: Is there a need to reconnect with the dying Bidayuh tradition? What is our responsibility towards this reconnection?

Project Details

A small study was conducted in 2022–2023 to document various communities' efforts for the Bidayuh language and cultural revival. Data were collected from different sources, including past studies, websites, online news, Instagram posts, and casual conversations with musicians, a documentary director and a mural artist. The communities' efforts were categorised according to three levels—(i) school, (ii) community and (iii) society—each with its own goals, methods and programs, encompassing both small and large domains.

Efforts Made for the Bidayuh Language and Cultural Revival

The three main efforts documented were reported with the intention of creating awareness of the Bidayuh language and cultural revival among locals and foreigners.

In 2014, a musical band, Suk Binie', was formed with six members from the Bidayuh community (see Figure 3). Suk Binie' refers to young seedlings in the Bau dialect. The band created a logo (see Figure 4) that resembles the 'S' shape, which signifies the shape of a leaf head falling inwards as it grows. This signification refers to the literal meaning of staying modest while growing with wisdom. The motif on the logo's petal represents Pokuh, a fiddlehead fern that is an essential food source for the Bidayuh community. The band composes music based on the traditions of indigenous communities in Sarawak, particularly the Bidayuhs, Ibans and Orang Ulu. They sing in the Bau dialect and dress in traditional costumes, including a tawuop/tahup (long loin-cloth wrapped around the body with one end hanging down in front and the other at the back), burang sumba (headgear) and kima (armlets). They also play traditional instruments, such as the kidibat (Bidayuh drum), serubai (flute), gong (percussion), kulintang (xylophone) and sape (lute).

Figure 3: *Suk Binie' logo (Source: https://sukbinie.weebly.com/about.html)*

Figure 4: *Suk Binie' music band (Source: https://sukbinie/weebly.com/)*

From 2015 to 2018, director Nova Goh from NG Pictures in Sabah filmed a documentary about the ring ladies from the Bi'embhan sub-ethnic group of the Bidayuh community living in Ulu Bengoh (see Figure 5). At the time of filming, nine ring ladies aged from their 70s to 90s carried the tradition of paad padi (bringing home rice from the field) while wearing ruyank'ng and rasunk'ng. However, at the time of writing (2025), only three ladies remain. Goh's documentary, which was released and broadcast nationally in 2018, highlights one of the ring ladies' (Peluk Abed, aged 70 years) struggles to adapt to her new home in the Bengoh Resettlement Area due to the construction of the Bengoh dam, which is currently used as a catchment area for Kuching. Her ancestral village was located in Kampung Semban, Hulu Padawan, commonly known as 'the village above clouds' due to its beautiful scenery in the mountainous area. The documentary also features how renowned fashion designer Leng Lagenda recreates the ring ladies' traditional costumes to suit a bridal collection for the contemporary fashion field (see Figure 6).

Figure 5: *The Last Ring Ladies, a documentary by Nova Goh (Source: Nova Goh)*

Figure 6: *A contemporary bridal outfit (left) alongside the traditional costume of the women of the Bi'embhan sub-tribe (right) (Source: Nova Goh)*

Following the documentary, in 2020, artist Leonard Siaw painted a mural featuring five remaining ring ladies (see Figure 7), measuring 13.7 m x 36.5 m, located in Kota Padawan (16 km south of Kuching), Sarawak. In the mural, Siaw captures the ring ladies in their traditional costume, with two practising their natural habit of chewing betel leaves, a tradition of thousands of years. Betel nuts and leaves and the traditional baskets woven by the ladies and used for harvesting in the field are also depicted in the mural.

Figure 7: *Dayang Hmuai Semban (The Beautiful Ladies of Semban), a mural by Leonard Siaw (Source: Leonard Siaw)*

These ring ladies are known as the living treasures of Sarawak because they are the last Bidayuh ladies carrying the tradition of paad padi (bringing home paddy from the field) while wearing ruyank'ng and rasunk'ng. Ruyank'ng and rasunk'ng are gold-coloured copper rings worn on the forearms and calves to symbolise the distinctive culture of the Semban group (see Figure 8). They are majestic to the Bidayuh ladies as they began wearing them at a very young

age and became part of their daily dress. Other than for health reasons, the rings are never removed throughout their daily activities, a tradition passed down for generations. It is believed that their ancestors sold goods obtained from the village to the Chinese traders, and the copper rings were used as payment. Besides the copper rings, the ladies' traditional costume consists of bulang sebi (headgear), tumbih (necklaces), kain ngumban (red sash), sisink'ng and wi (belts), baju putang (blouse) and jemuh sulam (skirt/sarong). When worn together, they are known as the unique tradition of Dayung Hmuai Semban (beautiful ladies of Semban) (see Figures 9 and 10).

Figure 8: *Ryuank'ng (gold-coloured copper rings) worn on forearms (Source: Nova Goh)*

Figure 9: *A ring lady with her necklace, chewing a betel nut (Source: Leonard Siaw)*

Figure 9: *Two ring ladies dancing to an ancestral song played by a Bidayuh man (Source: Leonard Siaw)*

Takeaways

This report compiles efforts by music band Suk Binie', director Nova Goh and artist Leonard Siaw to document the severely endangered Bidayuh language and dying culture of the Bidayuh ring ladies through musical performances, documentary filming and mural painting. These efforts deserve praise because they serve as a reminder of the strength, beauty and resilience of the Bidayuh community in Sarawak. They are also a reminder of the wide diversity of indigenous peoples, their languages, worldviews, knowledge systems and cultural practices that continue and persist today despite the pressures of globalisation, poverty, appropriation and exploitation of indigenous lands and natural resources that threaten their language and community structures.

Without such documentation, the younger and future generations will never be able to develop an appreciation and sense of connection with their language and cultural heritage. They will also not know of these Bidayuh ring ladies' existence and the traditions they carried for generations. Today, the Bidayuh language is mostly spoken by the older generation in the Bidayuh Belt, and the wearing of copper rings is only witnessed during festive ceremonies such as weddings. Therefore, the reconnection that Suk Binie', Goh, and Siaw made serves as a wake-up call for us to take responsibility for documenting the traditions, languages and cultures of the many indigenous communities so we can maintain the flourishing and diverse ecology of the world in which we live.

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Constructing Gender Disparities in the Usage of Speech Act of Request: A Pragmatic Study in India

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ABSTRACT

This article is an attempt to analyse the speech act of request employed by Indian male and female undergraduate learners in real-life discourse. This study is beneficial in comprehending how learners of both the genders perceive polite interaction. The study is an attempt to investigate whether gender of the speaker has any influence on the comprehension of the speech act of request and the choice of politeness strategies employed by them.
The data will be collected using a Discourse Completion Test (DCT), which is a questionnaire based on 12 real-life hypothetical situations. The sample of the study consists of 120 participants, with equal number of male and female learners, of undergraduate level at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. The data will be examined using Brown and Levinson's (1987) 'Politeness Theory' and Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's (1984) 'Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project' (CCSARP) methodology,

1. Introduction

Humans have been using language as a medium of communication for thousands of years. They have acquired knowledge of grammar and its usage, which Chomsky, the pioneer of Linguistics, called Competence. But Hymes (1972), another linguist, modified this concept and introduced the term 'communicative competence', which he defines as a speaker's ability to not only produce and comprehend the sentences but also to use them appropriately in the context. There are several studies that have highlighted that 'learners of a language can have all of the grammatical forms and lexical items and still fail completely at conveying their message because they lack necessary pragmatic or functional information to communicate their intent' (Cohen, 2004, p.3).

Communicative competence is therefore the prerequisite in language pedagogy apart from linguistic, discourse and strategic competence. It keeps in check the communicative constraints such as the relationship shared by the speaker and the hearer, as well as the space and temporal factors of speaking (Crystal, 2008, p.92). One of the key elements of communicative competence is pragmatic competence. Pragmatics is defined as:

> The study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter when using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication (Crystal, 1997).

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Pragmatics involves understanding how to engage in communicative activities and the ability to adapt language usage to the situational discourse (Kasper, 1997). Koike (1989) defines pragmatic competence as "the speaker's knowledge and use of rules of appropriateness and politeness which dictate the way the speaker will understand and formulate speech acts" (p. 279). The pragmatic competence guarantees the achievement of communication goals while preventing miscommunication. Developing pragmatic competence in second language learners is crucial as they acquire the social rules of their native languages, and learners from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds could adhere to distinct social standards as well as interactional patterns which may lead to various miscommunications (Blum-Kalka, 1982). Therefore, the notion of speech acts becomes apparent in pragmatics. Yule (1996, p.47) defines speech acts as 'actions performed via utterances' viz., apology, compliment, invitation, promise and request, which serves as a basic tenet of speech act theory. Building upon Austin's contributions, Searle (1967) introduced an additional categorisation of speech acts, which is succinctly outlined below:

1. **Declarations:** It changes the perception of the world or reality through worlds.
2. **Representations:** It states the belief of the speaker.
3. **Expressives:** It expresses the speaker's emotions.
4. **Directives:** It is used by the speaker to get something done.
5. **Commissives:** It commits the speakers themselves to do something in near time.

The central focus of this paper involves the speech act of making requests, which outlines the category of directives. The selection of speech act of request for this study stems from its frequency of usage in daily-life discourse. The identification of the kind of requests uttered by the learners makes them aware of their levels of politeness. The studies have been conducted to identify various speech acts and politeness strategies employed by the second language learners to avoid communication barriers. In the field of gendered languages, studies have been carried out arguing that there is a difference in the speeches of males and females in everyday discourses. These differences are usually the result of different cultural settings and societal norms. This paper is an attempt to make a significant step forward in the field and perceive whether there is any correlation between gender and speech act of requesting. The paper aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To explore the politeness strategies employed by the Indian ESL learners while constructing the speech act of request.
2. To investigate whether there exist any gender disparities in the Indian ESL undergraduate learners while producing the speech act of request.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Speech Act of Request

Request is an illocutionary act which belongs to Searle's category of Directives. As stated by Searle (1979), "these are attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. They may be very modest attempts as when I invite you to do it, or they may be very fierce attempts as when I insist that you do it". Requests are considered pre-event acts performed by the speaker in order to involve the listener in future courses of action. It contrasts with apologies, which are categorised as post-event acts.

2.2 Politeness and Politeness Theory

Politeness is representative of both a linguistic and socio-cultural phenomenon, and can be studied differently from both perspectives. In this paper, the focus is on linguistic politeness. Over the years, many linguists have tried to define politeness. Lakoff (1990, p.3) defines politeness as ‘a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange’; while Yule (2006. p.119) defines it as ‘showing awareness of and consideration for another person’s face’. In the field of politeness studies, Brown and Levinson (1978) have produced a substantial amount of work. Their Theory of Politeness is marked as an important framework with respect to analysing politeness related discourse. The theory encompasses the notions of ‘face’, ‘face-threatening acts’ (FTA) and strategies to achieve politeness.

The English folk word and Goffman (1967) are the sources of the concept of ‘face’, which relates ‘face’ with concepts of humiliation and embarrassment. It refers to the self-image of a person created for the public. The ‘face’ can be harmed, protected or ameliorated, thus, it needs attention in daily discourses. Politeness is defined as an instrument engaged to display awareness of the face of another. The notion of ‘face’ has been categorised into ‘Positive’ and ‘Negative’ faces. As defined by Brown and Levinson (1987), the ‘negative face’ is **“**the want of every ‘competent adult member’ that his actions be unimpeded by others” and the ‘positive face’ as **“**the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others” (p.62). In simpler terms, a person’s ‘negative face’ is his need for independence while the ‘positive face’ is his need for inclusion or connection with others. During daily social discourse, people assume or expect that their public self-image will be revered or they will be acknowledged in the interaction. If there is a danger to an individual's self-image by a speaker, it is referred to as a ‘Face Threatening Act’ (FTA) (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p.65). Therefore, politeness strategies are applied to safeguard an individual's face from being harmed during the course of a conversation. As requests are considered a ‘Face Threatening Act’ (FTA) by Brown and Levinson (1978), it is required by an individual to choose appropriate politeness strategies to either reinforce or alleviate the impacts of FTA on one’s face.

2.3 Politeness or Request Strategies

There have been several theoretical and empirical studies by Searle (1975, 1979), House and Kasper (1981) and Blum-Kulka (1984) based on the speech act of making requests. These studies have standardised the classification of request strategies cross-linguistically. A ‘Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project’ (CCSARP) framework was provided by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain in 1984. This framework classified three main levels of directness that are anticipated to be utilised consistently while submitting requests:

a) ‘Direct’ or ‘Explicit’ level
b) ‘Conventionally Indirect’ level
c) ‘Non-conventional Indirect’ level

These directness levels were further separated into nine different techniques: Mood derivable, Performative, Hedged performative, Obligation statement, Want statement, Suggestive formulae, Query preparatory, Strong hints, and Mild hints (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984, p.133), which speakers use when requesting something. Since politeness and directness of request are negatively correlated, a request that is perceived as being less courteous is one that is

more direct. As requests are categorised as FTA, it is needed for an individual to choose an appropriate politeness strategy in order to minimize the harm caused to an individual's face.

2.4 Gender and Speech Act of Request

Gender is associated with pragmatics and sociolinguistics as gendered roles are defined by societal expectations and norms. Scholars of Gender and Women Studies are of the view that language is an extremely significant aspect of the process of socialisation, which ultimately shapes one's diverse feelings, attitudes and behaviours. According to studies conducted on language and gender, it has been argued that men and women speak differently (Gray, 1992; Maltz and Borker, 1982; Lakoff, 1973). Lakoff (1973) highlighted that women's speech is filled with elements such as, hedges, tag questions and intensifiers, which are also some elements of politeness. It was put forward that women's speech is more polite than their male counterparts on accounts of their cultural upbringing and social expectations (Lakoff 1973; Brown, 1987; Holmes, 1984). Tannen (1994) argued that male conversations aim to communicate factual information, whereas females are more concerned with establishing and preserving relationships.

Gender disparities have also been looked at in the spoken act of requesting. Shams and Afghari (2011) looked into the possibility of gender and cultural background having an impact on indirect speech act usage. The results of the study showed that while gender has no bearing on speech act understanding, culture does. Moreover, there is a difference in the politeness level of the participants as female participants were found to be more polite than male participants. Further studies have demonstrated that the perception of direct and indirect request acts are influenced by gender and that females are more likely to use indirect request acts compared to males (Mckelvie, 2000; Mulac, Bradac, & Gibbons, 2001).

3. Methodology

The present study is both qualitative and quantitative in character and aims at finding out the politeness strategies used by the undergraduate ESL learners in constructing the speech act of request and to further analyse if there exist any gender differences in the learners while producing the speech act of request. To meet the desired objectives, Discourse Completion Test (DCT), which is a set of 12 real-life hypothetical situations, was administered on 120 ESL learners (60 females and 60 males) of undergraduate level in Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), Aligarh, U.P.

The participants were instructed to fill a questionnaire with suitable requests. The word 'request' was explicitly stated in order to eliminate all biases. The data was examined using Brown and Levinson's (1987) 'Politeness Theory' and Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's (1984) 'Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project' (CCSARP) methodology. By analysing the collected data, the research objectives were comprehensively investigated.

4. Results and Discussion

The examination of the gathered data for this research has showcased that Indian undergraduate ESL learners typically execute the speech act of request using a variety of request tactics. These strategies are covered in the following section.

4.1 The types of request strategies employed by the Indian undergraduate learners

This section is devoted to the analysis of the collected data in order to recognise the request strategies readily used by the undergraduate ESL learners to perform the speech act of request.

The findings revealed that the learners mainly use five request strategies: Query preparatory, Strong hints, Mild hints, Suggestive formulae, and Mood derivable to perform the speech act of request. The frequency of each strategy is mentioned against it in the following table:

Type of Request	Descriptive Category	Frequency
Conventionally Indirect	Query Preparatory	608
Non-Conventionally Indirect	Mild Hints	139
Conventionally Indirect	Suggestive Formulae	129
Direct Level	Mood Derivable	127

4.1.1 Query Preparatory

According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1987), this strategy prepares the listener to perform the stated request in any specific language. It is categorised as a 'conventionally indirect' request strategy. The data analysis indicated that the learners have carried out the speech act of request in six out of twelve distinct real-life situations by mostly using the 'query preparatory' request strategy. It has the highest frequency of 608.

DCT Item	Examples
Situation 03	Would you mind removing your laptop from charging?
Situation 06	Can you speak loudly?
Situation 07	Could you give me two more minutes, please?
Situation 10	Would you mind if I use the treadmill after you?
Situation 11	Would you mind giving your toothpaste to me?
Situation 12	Could you please refill my cup?

4.1.2 Mild Hints

According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1987), this strategy makes no mention of the items or components required to carry out the spoken act of request, like strong hints, but can be interpreted through the context as requests. It is categorised as a 'non-conventionally indirect strategy' of request. Based on the analysed data, 'mild hints' is the second most used request strategy, employed by the learners. The frequency of its usage is 139.

DCT Item	Examples
Situation 01	Thank you for the coffee! I missed my last class and now I don't know how to complete my notes as exams are near.
Situation 04	The hospital doesn't want any crowding at the entrance gate.

4.1.3 Suggestive Formulae

According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1987), this strategy provides a suggestion to the listener. It is categorised as a 'conventionally indirect strategy' of request. It has a frequency of 129.

DCT Item	Examples
Situation 05	Why don’t you leave me alone?
Situation 08	Would you mind dropping me home?

4.1.4 Mood Derivable

According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1987), this strategy uses ‘the grammatical mood of the verb in the utterance to denote its illocutionary force serving as a request’. It falls under the category of direct level strategy of request. It is the least polite request strategy as the direct politeness strategies are less courteous than the indirect politeness strategies. According to the data analysis, the participants' least preferred request approach while making a verbal act of request is ‘mood derivable’. The frequency of its occurrence is 127.

DCT Item	Examples
Situation 02	Clean up the kitchen, dude.
Situation 09	Be quick.

4.2 Gender Differences in the Learners in Employing the Speech Act of Request

This section focuses on the difference between Indian male and female undergraduate ESL learners while producing the speech act of request. Each request strategy's frequency of use by both male and female learners is displayed in the following table:

Categories of Requests	Male	Female
Query Preparatory	297	311
Mild Hints	68	71
Suggestive Formulae	65	64
Mood Derivable	66	61

Female participants used ‘query preparatory’ request strategy more than their male counterparts. Their frequency of usage is diverse from one another. As the ‘query preparatory’ strategy is considered conventionally indirect, it is regarded as more polite than the direct request strategy. Female participants also utilised ‘mild hints’ more than the male participants, however, the difference in the frequency is not significant. Another important observation that can be drawn from the table is that male participants used direct politeness strategy by involving ‘mood derivable’ more than the female participants; and according to Brown and Levinson (1987), indirect politeness strategies are more courteous than the direct ones.

The data analysis's findings revealed that Indian undergraduate female ESL learners are more polite than the male learners and they use more indirect request strategies than direct strategies as the former are considered more polite.

5. Conclusion

The results of the data collected depict different request strategies adopted by Indian undergraduate ESL learners in real-life situations. These strategies incorporate request strategies that are both direct and indirect viz. query preparatory, mild hints, suggestive formulae, and mood derivable.

Additionally, the current study has shown that several request strategies are chosen by Indian male and female undergraduate ESL learners. However, the research sample is restricted to undergraduate ESL learners of AMU, Aligarh only, but it is expected to make contributions in the existing field of language pedagogy by helping teachers in making the learners competent in the language. It is also beneficial for making both male and female learners aware of the request making strategies employed by them.

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Appendix

Instructions:

Read the following situations below and choose an appropriate response based on the context provided. Imagine yourself in the situation and try to respond naturally.

Name:

Gender:

- o Male
- o Female
- o Other

E-mail:

Situation 1: You have an exam around the corner but you have missed your last class. You went to your friend's house. Your friend offered you a cup of coffee.

Your response:

- o Not really. I came here to ask you to lend me your notes from the last class.
- o I appreciate the offer, but could you also lend me your notes?
- o Thank you for the coffee. I missed my last class and now I don't know how to complete my notes as exams are approaching.

Situation 2: You are expecting a visit from your friend in your PG tonight and your roommate has left the kitchen in a mess.

Your response:

- o Clean up the kitchen.
- o Why don't you go and clean the mess in the kitchen?
- o You have left the kitchen in a real mess, yesterday.

Situation 3: You are in the library working on your laptop. Suddenly, you notice your laptop is running out of battery and someone is using the nearby power outlet.

Your response:

- o Hey! I want you to remove your charger from the power outlet.
- o Would you mind removing your laptop from charging, please?
- o My laptop is running out of battery.

Situation 4: You are a valet attendant and you notice that someone has parked their car right at the entrance gate of the hospital.

Your response:

- o You'll have to move your car.
- o Would you mind moving your car?
- o The hospital doesn't want any crowding at the entrance gate.

Situation 5: You have joined a college recently and one of your classmates is constantly pestering you for the last three days.

Your response:

- o Leave me alone.
- o Why don't you leave me alone?
- o I'm the principal's child.

Situation 6: There is a presentation in your class. One of your classmates is giving the presentation but is hardly audible.

Your response:

- o Speak loudly.
- o Can you speak loudly, please?
- o I can't hear you.

Situation 7: You are giving an exam and the time is almost over. The teacher has come to take your answer sheet.

Your response:

- o You'll have to give me more time.
- o Could you give me two more minutes, please?
- o I am not done with the answer yet.

Situation 8: You have missed your school bus. One of your classmates, who owns a vehicle, lives on the same street as you.

Your response:

- o I want you to drop me home.
- o Would you mind dropping me home?
- o I've missed my bus and there isn't another one for an hour.

Situation 9: You are a teacher and you have given a writing task to the students. They are taking more than assigned time.

Your response:

- o Be quick!
- o Why don't you all finish the task quickly?
- o We have more tasks to do.

Situation 10: You are in a gymnasium and want to use the treadmill but someone else is using it.

Your response:

- o Leave the treadmill.
- o Would you mind if I use the treadmill after you?
- o It's time for me to use the treadmill, now.

Situation 11: You are staying in a hotel, and you realize that you forgot to pack your toothpaste. You see a fellow guest in the hallway.

Your response:

- o I would like to ask you to give me your toothpaste.
- o Would you mind giving your toothpaste to me?
- o I forgot to bring my toothpaste.

Situation 12: You are in a coffee shop which offers unlimited refills. You've just finished your coffee and want to ask the barista for a refill.

Your response:

- o I want you to refill my cup.
- o Could you please refill my cup?
- o I have finished my coffee.

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Structure of Numerals in Tibeto-Burman Languages

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A B S T R A C T

The objective of this study is to examine structural comparisons of numeral systems in Tibeto-Burman (TB) languages spoken in Manipur, India. The selected TB languages of study are Manipuri, Koireng, Moyon and Tarao. The characteristics being the decimal nature show a common system in these languages except Manipuri and Moyon wherein both decimal and vigesimal systems are distinguished. As features of other Tibeto-Burman languages the constructions of higher numerals persist through additions, multiplications and multiplication plus addition. This paper aims to address these features by investigating the use of both decimal and vigesimal systems within the context of numeral systems in Manipuri, Koireng, Moyon and Tarao.

1. Introduction

Numerals occupy a space in the human communication system. Languages of the world employ numerals in order to specify a numerical quantity. Every language possesses a system of numerals regardless of their prominence or not. Even if a language itself is prominent, its own numeral system becomes endangered due to the neighbouring politically and economically predominant languages. Comrie (2005) rightly points out that an indigenous numeral system becomes more endangered even if the language itself is not endangered. Even some of the major languages adopt the numerals of another language thereby making the own numeral systems endangered. It is pertinent to mention as an instance here that Japanese and Thai are largely using Chinese numerals. The northeast of India has the densest concentration of Tibeto-Burman languages. It has high linguistic and ethnic heterogeneity. The northeast of India can also be considered as Mini-India for four major language families are available i.e. Austro-Asiatic (Khasi in Meghalaya), Dravidian (Tamil in Moreh, a small Indo-Burma border Town), Indo-Aryan (Assamese in Assam, Bengali in Tripura) and Sino-Tibetan (languages in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Garo of Meghalaya, Boro of Assam, Kokborok of Tripura). There are, as a whole, various ethnic groups speaking more than one hundred Tibeto-Burman languages (Barua, 1997).

Manipur is a state situated in the north-eastern part of India, which is rich in its diverse cultures and languages. Manipur shares borders with Nagaland (north), Mizoram (south), Assam (west) and international borders with Myanmar (east). In the state there are 34 officially recognized Tibeto-Burman languages such as, Aimol, Angami, Anal, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Hmar, Inpui, Kom, Koireng, Kabui, Kharam, Koirao (Thangal), Lamkang, Liangmei, Manipuri, Mao, Maram, Maring, Monsang, Moyon, Paite, Paomei, Purum, Rongmei, Ralti, Sema, Simte, Sukte, Tangkhul, Tarao, Thadou, Vaiphei, and Zou. These languages except Manipuri are the

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tribal languages which are maximally not studied scientifically. Maximum of these languages' numeral system is not clear as a lot of borrowing or loan items already existed. The selected TB languages of the present study are Manipuri, Koireng, Moyon and Tarao whose numeral systems need to be preserved. In the classification of Tibeto-Burman languages, Grierson-Konow (1903-1928) places Manipuri in Kuki-Chin proper group. Safer (1974) puts it in Meitei Branch of Kukish section. According to Benedict (1972), Manipuri comes under Kuki-Naga of Kukish section. Koireng (Kwoireng) belongs to the Kuki-Chin groups of Tibeto-Burman sub-family (Grierson, 1904). Grierson-Konow (1904) places Kwoireng under Naga-Kuki subgroup of Naga group. Shafer (1955, 1966) places Kwoireng under Western Branch of Kukish section of Burmic division. Benedic (1972) puts Kwoireng under Western Kuki subgroup of Transition to Naga of Kuki-Naga (Kukish). Bradley (1997) placed it in Zeiliangrong group of Southern Naga group. Moyon is placed under old Kuki groups (Marrison, 1967). Moyon speakers are concentrated in the south eastern part of Manipur, particularly in the Chandel District. Marrison (1967) puts Moyon under old Kuki groups. Tarao is one of the oldest tribes in Manipur. They are concentrated in the district of Chandel, the south eastern part of Manipur. T.C. Hodson (1908) placed Tarao in old Kuki groups. R. B. Pemberton (1835) also put Tarao in Old Kuki group.

The numeral systems of Manipuri, Koireng, Moyon and Tarao are mainly of the decimal type as in many other Tibeto-Burman languages. However, Manipuri and Moyon have the vigesimal numeral systems. These languages are not classifier languages. In these languages higher numerals are constructed through additions, multiplications and multiplication plus addition. This paper aims to address these features by investigating the use of both decimal and vigesimal systems within the context of numeral systems in Manipuri, Koireng, Moyon and Tarao. The method to be adopted in this study would be descriptive and at times analytical approach as the methodology is concerned. The data incorporated in the study are based on data which are collected from the field study conducted for preserving indigenous numerals of TB languages. The record of the data started in 2022 and so far 8 TB languages of northeast India are covered. An experiment of recording and analysing data was carried out with six native speakers each (3 females and 3 males between the age group of 22-65).

The present work is organized as follows. Section 1 deals with the general introduction to the study. Section 2 describes the structures of numerals in four languages and their classifications. Section 3 summarizes the paper.

2. Numerals and their classifications

A numeral is a name that stands for a number like one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, and so on. Numerals in the languages of the present study consist of a word or phrase referring to a number. As in many other TB languages, the numeral system of these languages is mainly of decimal types. There is no vigesimal system in these languages except Manipuri and Moyon. The position of the numeral of these languages is postnominal. Structurally numerals of these languages are primarily classified into the following major types:

a) cardinals,
b) ordinals,
c) multiplicatives

a) Cardinals

Cardinal numerals are a set of numerals which are used to quantify nouns. Morphologically, cardinal numerals can be sub-categorised into two viz., i) basic cardinals and ii) derived cardinals.

2.1 Basic cardinals

In Tibeto-Burman languages there is a basic form of numerals denoting numbers from one to ten, Twenty, hundreds and thousands which are non-derived numerals. Basic cardinals are the system of numbers on the basis of which derived numerals are constituted. In Manipuri, basic cardinals from one to ten, twenty, fifty, hundred and thousand are distinct while Koireng and Moyon have basic numbers from one to ten, hundred and thousand only. However, basic cardinals in Tarao are the numbers from one to ten only. The basic cardinals in these languages are shown below:

Manipuri	**Koireng**	**Moyon**	**Tarao**	**Gloss**
əmə	kinkhət	iŋkhe	inkhət	'one'
əni	kinni	innə	inni	'two'
əhum	kinthum	inthum	inthum	'three'
məri	minli	mənra	mənli	'four'
məŋa	riŋŋa	ruŋa	rəŋŋa	'five'
təruk	kuruk	kuruk	kuruk	'six'
təret	səri	sərə	siri	'seven'
nipan	kiriet	irə	kirit	'eight'
mapəl	ko	iko	ku	'nine'
təra	som	sum	som	'ten'
kun	……	somnə	……	'twenty'
…….	rija	……	……	'hundred'
lisiŋ	lisiŋ	lisiŋ	……	'thousand'

It is observed that the first three basic numerals in these languages (except Moyon) have their respective same initial syllable which is prefixed till the number three (3) viz, *ə-* in Manipuri, *kin-* in Koireng and *in-* in Tarao. The last syllables i.e. *-ŋa* for five (5) and *-ruk* for six (6) in these languages are same. Manipuri and Moyon have the basic numeral, twenty (20) but Koireng and Tarao do not have. The numeral hundred is not a basic numeral to all these languages except Koireng which is *rija* 'hundred'. The numeral thousand is a basic and native term of Manipuri and the same is used in Koireng and Moyon. It is not a basic numeral in Tarao. The use of numerals higher than hundred and thousand is borrowed from English like *lak* 'Lakh', *kror* 'crore'. The term *koti* 'crore' borrowed from Indo-Aryan language, Hindi is also found to be used.

2.2 Derived cardinals

In the construction of cardinals, two independent numeral morphemes are combined in order to derive numerals in these four languages. The combination of the basic numeral morphemes as in many other Tibeto-Burman languages is very productive. Different relationships of the derived cardinal numerals such as, summation, multiplication, and multiplication plus summation are discussed below.

2.2.1 Derived numerals through summation

In these languages, numerals are also derived through the process of summation. Numerals from eleven (11) to nineteen (19) are formed by adding lower numerals from one (1) to nine (9) to the root of 'ten'. It is processed in such a way that the first component is 'ten' and the second component is any numerals from one (1) to nine (9) by deleting the initial syllable or adding

extra syllables. Following details of the derived numerals through summation in Manipuri, Koireng, Moyon and Tarao can be considered.

A. Manipuri derived numerals through summation

The marker *ə-* that is prefixed to the basic cardinals one (1), two (2) and three (3) has an established proto-Tibeto-Burman ancestry (Singh, 2000). The numerals from eleven (11) to thirteen (13) consist of the roots of one (1), two (2) and three (3) respectively along with a lexical item *thoi/doi* 'exceed/more' which are added to the ten (10). The numerals from fourteen (14) to nineteen (19) are formed by adding basic cardinals four (4) to nine (9) directly to the numeral ten (10). The pattern of these numerals can be structured as A + B (where A = decade; B = roots of eleven (11) to thirteen (13) and direct addition of four (4) to nine (9)).

təra (10) + ma (1) + thoi (more)	təramathoi	'eleven (11)'
təra (10) + ni (2) + thoi (more)	təranithoi	'twelve (12)'
təra (10) + hum (3) + doi (more)	tərahumdoi	'thirteen (13)'
təra (10) + mari (4)	təramari	'fourteen (14)'
təra (10) + məŋa (5)	təraməŋa	'fifteen (15)'
təra (10) + təruk (6)	təratəruk	'sixteen (16)'
təra (10) + təret (7)	təratəret	'seventeen (17)'
təra (10) + nipan (8)	təranipan	'eighteen (18)'
təra (10) + mapəl (9)	təramapəl	'nineteen (19)'

It is observed that the numerals *təramathoi* '11', *təranithoi* '12' and *tərahumdoi* '13' consist of the basic cardinal root *-ma,* 'one' *-ni,* 'two' *-hum* 'three' plus the lexical *-thoi* 'exceed/more' suffixing them to *təra* '10'. Thus *eleven* (11) is *təra* '10' + *ma* '1' + *thoi* 'exceed/more'. This pattern is followed to every counting such as, twenty one '21' to twenty three '23', thirty one '31' to thirty three '33', forty one '41' to forty three '43' so on and till ninety one '91' to ninety three '93'. The lexical item *-thoi* 'exceed/more' is dropped for the numerals from fourteen '14' to nineteen '19', twenty four '24' to twenty nine '29', thirty four '34' to thirty nine '39', forty four '44' to forty nine '49', and so on (Singh, 2000). Syntactic analysis of the occurrence of these numerals can be illustrated as follows.

(1) mi təra-ni-thoi pha-khə-re
person ten-two-more arrest-DEF-PFV
'Twelve persons have been arrested.'

(2) lairik təra-təruk tha-rək-le
book ten-six send-DEIC-PFV
'Sixteen books have been sent in.'

(3) əŋaŋ kun-ni-thoi miŋ cəl-le
child twenty-two-more name enrol-PFV
'Twenty two children have been enrolled.'

(4) lan-du-də lan-mi kul-hum-doi si-re
war-DEM-LOC war-person twenty-three-more die-PFV

‘Twenty three soldiers died in the war.’

(5)	*kun-ni-thoi	əŋaŋ	miŋ	cəl-le
	twenty-two-more	child	name	enrol-PFV

(6)	*lan-du-də	kul-hum-doi	lan-mi	si-re
	war-DEM-LOC	twenty-three-more	war-person	die-PFV
	‘Twenty three soldiers died in the war.’			

In the instances (1-4) above, numerals *təra-ni-thoi* ‘twelve’, *təra-təruk* ‘sixteen’, *kun-ni-thoi* ‘twenty two’ and *kul-hum-doi* ‘twenty three’ occurred following the nouns *mi* ‘person’, *lairik* ‘book’, *əŋaŋ* ‘child’, *lanmi* ‘soldier’ respectively and hence, the position of numerals in the language is postnominal. It is also observed that the occurrence of numerals preceding the nouns in the instances (5) and (6) above is unacceptable and ungrammatical for not showing agreement between the order of numerals and nouns.

B. Koireng derived numerals through summation

In Koireng, the numerals from eleven (11) to nineteen (19) are derived by a special character -*ləi*-, an additive marker inserting between the two cardinal numbers (Singh, 2010). In order to construct the derived numerals the first syllables *kin-, min-, ku-, sa-, ki-* of the basic cardinals from one (1) to nine (9) except the numeral five are dropped and suffixed to the additive marker -*ləi*- and then both get attached to the numeral ten (10) as shown in the following.

som (10) + ləi + khət (1)	somləikhət	‘eleven (11)’
som (10) + ləi + ni (2)	somləini	‘twelve (12)’
som (10) + ləi + thum (3)	somləithum	‘thirteen (13)’
som (10) + ləi + li (4)	somləili	‘fourteen (14)’
som (10) + ləi + riŋa (5)	somləiriŋa	‘fifteen (15)’
som (10) + ləi + ruk (6)	somləiruk	‘sixteen (16)’
som (10) + ləi + ri (7)	somləiri	‘seventeen (17)’
som (10) + ləi + rijet (8)	somləirijet	‘eighteen (18)’
som (10) + ləi + ko (9)	somləiko	‘nineteen (19)’

Following constructions manifest the occurrences of the Koireng numerals in phrase or sentence levels.

(7)	ui	som-ləi-ni
	dog	ten-ADM-two
	‘Twelve dogs.’	

(8)	ro	som-ləi-rijet
	bamboo	ten-ADM-eight
	‘Eighteen bamboos.’	

(9)	əma	thəihai	som-ləi-ruk	ə-cak
	he	mango	ten-ADM-six	3P-eat

'He eats sixteen mangoes.'

(10)	kəi-ni	ulənai	som-ləi-li	kin-ni
	I-PL	brother	ten-ADM-four	1P-COP

'We are fourteen brothers.'

The position of numerals *som-ləi-ni* 'twelve', *som-ləi-rijet* 'eighteen', *som-ləi-ruk* 'sixteen' and *som-ləi-li* 'fourteen' in Koireng is postnominal as clearly shown in the above constructions (7-10).

C. Moyon derived numerals through summation

The derived numerals from eleven (11) to nineteen (19) in Moyon are formed by an additive marker *-ərə-* which is inserted between the numeral ten (10) and the basic numerals from one (1) to nine (9), but for eleven (11), twelve (12) and thirteen (13) the initial sound of the first syllable *i-* is dropped (Devi, 2010).

sum (10) + ərə + ŋkhe (1)	sumərəŋkhe	'eleven (11)'
sum (10) + ərə + nnə (2)	sumərənnə	'twelve (12)'
sum (10) + ərə + nthum (3)	sumərənthum	'thirteen (13)'
sum (10) + ərə + mənrə (4)	sumərəmənrə	'fourteen (14)'
sum (10) + ərə + ruŋa (5)	sumərəruŋa	'fifteen (15)'
sum (10) + ərə + kuruk (6)	sumərəkuruk	'sixteen (16)'
sum (10) + ərə + sərə (7)	sumərəsərə	'seventeen (17)'
sum (10) + ərə + irə (8)	sumərəira	'eighteen (18)'
sum (10) + ərə + iko (9)	sumərəiko	'nineteen (19)'

Following constructions manifest the occurrence of derived numerals in Moyon syntactically. The occurrence of numerals in sentences (11) to (13) is postnominal and the prenominal of it is unacceptable in the language as in (14) and (15) below.

(11)	sər	sum-ərə-ruŋa	mar-ne
	cow	ten-ADM-five	graze-PROG

'Fifteen cows are grazing.'

(12)	nepəŋ	sum-ərə-nnə	si-se
	child	ten-ADM-two	go-PFV

'Twelve children have left.'

(13)	ŋa	sum-ərə-ira	cə-na	oŋ-na
	fish	ten-ADM-eight	water-LOC	live-SAM

'Eighteen fishes live in the water.'

(14)	*sum-ərə-ruŋa sər	mar-ne	
	ten-ADM-five	cow	graze-PROG

(15) *sum-ərə-nnə nepəŋ si-se

ten-ADM-two child go-PFV

D. Tarao derived numerals through summation

The derived numerals through summation in Tarao are constructed by adding the basic cardinal numerals from one (1) to nine (9) to the base of the numeral ten (10). In the construction of such derived numerals a similar additive marker *-ləi-* is directly inserted between the numeral ten (10) and the numerals one (1) to (9) (Singh, 2002). Unlike the above three languages, there is no deletion of initial syllable or sound from the basic cardinals eleven (11), twelve (12) and thirteen (13) as can be seen in the following examples.

som (10) + ləi + inkhət (1)	somləi inkhət	'eleven (11)'
som (10) + ləi + ini (2)	somləi ini	'twelve (12)'
som (10) + ləi + inthum (3)	somləi inthum	'thirteen (13)'
som (10) + ləi + mənli (4)	somləi mənli	'fourteen (14)'
som (10) + ləi + raŋŋa (5)	somləi raŋŋa	'fifteen (15)'
som (10) + ləi + kuruk (6)	somləi kuruk	'sixteen (16)'
som (10) + ləi + siri (7)	somləi siri	'seventeen (17)'
som (10) + ləi + kirit (8)	somləi kirit	'eighteen (18)'
som (10) + ləi + ku (9)	somləi ku	'nineteen (19)'

The position of numerals in Tarao is postnominal as other TB languages which can be seen in the constructions below.

(16) əma-nə thiŋ som-ləi-kuruk ətən
he-NOM tree ten-ADM-six cut
'He cut sixteen trees.'

(17) pate som-ləi-inkhət leŋ məŋəi
boy ten-ADM-one play PROG
'Eleven boys are playing.'

(18) ənma som-ləi-kirit la ə-thlok məŋəi
they ten-ADM-eight song 3PP-sing PROG
'Eighteen of them is singing.'

From the above discussion of the derived numerals through summation in four languages it is observed that numerals from eleven (11) to nineteen (19) are constituted through summation. In Manipuri and Moyon numerals from twenty one (21) to twenty nine (29) are constituted in the same manner as numerals from eleven (11) to nineteen (19) above. The numerals twenty '*kun'* in Manipuri and '*somnə'* in Moyon are the basic cardinal numbers. Their numerals from twenty one (21) to twenty nine (29) are based on twenty (20) i.e. twenty based system, called as vigesimal system. However, a marker *ərə-* is prefixed to the basic numerals one (1) to three (3) by dropping the first syllable *i-*. But this marker *ərə-* is directly prefixed to the numerals from four (4) to nine (9) without altering any forms. The following numeral data show the existence of vigesimal system.

Manipur	**Moyon**	**Gloss**
kun +ma + thoi (more) = kunmathoi	somnə + ərəŋkhe = somnə ərəŋkhe	'twenty one'
kun + ni + thoi (more) = kunnithoi	somnə + ərənnə = somnə ərənnə	'twenty two'
kun + hum + doi (more) = kunhumdoi	somnə + ərənthum = somnə ərənthum	'twenty three'
kun + mari = kunmari	somnə + ərəmənrə = somnə ərəmənrə	'twenty four'
kun + məŋa = kunməŋa	somnə + ərəruŋa = somnə ərəruŋa	'twenty five'
kun + təruk = kuntəruk	somnə + ərəkuruk = somnə ərəkuruk	'twenty six'
kun + təret = kuntəret	somnə + ərəsərə = somnə ərəsərə	'twenty seven'
kun + nipal = kunnipal	somnə + ərəirə = somnə ərəirə	'twenty eight'
kun + mapəl = kunmapəl	somnə + ərəiko = somnə ərəiko	'twenty nine'

Interestingly, Manipuri numerals from thirty one (31) to thirty nine (39) are also derived through summation of three components. As for example, *kun+təra+mathoi* '20 + 10 + 1', *kun+təra+nithoi* '20 + 10 + 2'……… *kun+təra+nipan* '20 + 10 + 8' and *kun+təra+mapəl* '20 + 10 + 9'.

In the case of Koireng and Tarao, the numerals from twenty one (21) to twenty nine (29) are not formed in the same manner as eleven (11) to nineteen (19) above. Their numerals from twenty one (21) to twenty nine (29) are not based on twenty (20). They do not show the existence of vigesimal system. The numerals from twenty one (21) to twenty nine (29) in Koireng and Tarao are developed through multiplication plus summation which are examined in the respective sub-sections.

2.2.2 Derived numerals through multiplication

Numerals such as twenty (20), thirty (30), forty (40), fifty (50), sixty (60), seventy (70), eighty (80) and ninety (90) in the present languages of study are constructed through multiplication. The formation of numerals 20 (except Manipuri and Moyon, since twenty based numeral is used), 30 (except Manipuri, composed of 20+10), 40, 50 (except Manipuri, a lexical item, *jaŋkhəi* 'fifty' as half of the hundred is used), 60, 70 (except Manipuri, derived through multiplication plus summation), 80 and 90 (except Manipuri, derived through multiplication plus summation) are analysed with the following numeral data through multiplication processes.

A. Manipuri derived numerals through multiplication

Unlike other languages, numerals forty (40), sixty (60), 'seventy (70)' eighty (80) and 'ninety (90)' are derived through multiplication. Following numeral data show the structural patterns of formation of these numerals.

ni (2) x phu 'beat' (20) niphu 'forty (40)'
hum (3) x phu 'beat' (20) humphu 'sixty (60)'
hum (3) x phu 'beat' (20) + təra (10) humphutəra'seventy (70) '(multiplication plus summation)
məri (4) x phu 'beat' (20) məriphu 'eighty (80)'
məri (4) x phu 'beat' (20) + təra (10) məriphutəra 'ninety (90)' (multiplication plus summation)

The numerals forty (40), sixty (60), and eighty (80) are derived through multiplication of juxtaposed numbers, following a vigesimal system (Singh, 2000). Therefore, *niphu* 'forty (40)' is

developed through the process of multiplication as *ni* '2' times *phu* 'beat' (multiply) '20'. Similarly, *humphu* 'sixty (60)' is formed as *hum* '3' times 20 and *məriphu* 'eighty (80)' is formed as *məri* '4' times '20'. The same pattern is followed in the construction of seventy (70) and ninety (90) but a numeral decade gets added since it is the process of deriving numerals through multiplication plus addition.

B. Koireng derived numerals through multiplication

In this language, the numerals twenty (20), thirty (30), forty (40), fifty (50), ……….. and ninety (90) are derived through the multiplication process wherein the first component that is fixed with the numeral *som* 'ten' is multiplied by the respective basic cardinal numerals from *kinni* 'two' to *ko* 'nine'. In this pattern, the first syllable *kin-* of *kinni* 'two' and *kinthum* 'three', *ku-* of *kuruk* 'six', *ki-* of kiriet 'eight' of the basic cardinal numerals are dropped and the rests are found to be used as it is. The structure of this derived numerals is arranged in such a way that the multiplicand *som* 'ten' as a first component (A) is multiplied by the respective multipliers from 2 to 9 as a second component (B) i.e. the unit morpheme following the ten morpheme *som* 'ten' as exemplified below.

som (10) x ni (2)　　somni 'twenty (20)'
som (10) x thum (3)　　somthum 'thirty (30)'
som (10) x minli (4)　　somminli 'forty (40)'
som (10) x riŋŋa (5)　　somriŋŋa 'fifty (50)'
som (10) x ruk (6)　　somruk 'sixty (60)'
som (10) x səri (7)　　somsəri 'seventy (70)'
som (10) x riet (8)　　somriet 'eighty (80)'
som (10) x ko (9)　　somko 'ninety (90)'

C. Moyon derived numerals through multiplication

Numerals thirty (30), forty (40), fifty (50), ……….. and ninety (90) in Moyon are derived through the multiplication process wherein the first component that is fixed with the numeral *sum* 'ten' is multiplied by the respective basic cardinal numerals from *ithum* 'three' to *iko* 'nine'. In this pattern, the first syllable *i-* of *ithum* 'three' is dropped and the rests are found to be used as it is. The structure of this derived numerals is arranged in such a way that the multiplicand *sum* 'ten' as a first component (A) is multiplied by the respective multipliers from 3 to 9 as a second component (B) as A x B as exemplified below.

sum (10) x thum (3)　　sumthum 'thirty (30)'
sum (10) x mənra (4)　　summənra 'forty (40)'
sum (10) x ŋa (5)　　sumŋa 'fifty (50)'
sum (10) x ruk (6)　　sumruk 'sixty (60)'
sum (10) x sərə (7)　　sumsərə 'seventy (70)'
sum (10) x irə (8)　　sumirə 'eighty (80)'
sum (10) x iko (9)　　sumiko 'ninety (90)'

However, speakers surprisingly do not use the above patterns of numerals. The pattern shown here is scientific based on the numeral formation through multiplication. Speakers express

a pattern that is unscientific. The following patterns are as per the primary data collected from the language consultants of Moyon.

somthum	‘thirty (30)’
sommənra	‘forty (40)’
somŋa	‘fifty (50)’
somruk	‘sixty (60)’
somsərə	‘seventy (70)’
somirə	‘eighty (80)’
somiko	‘ninety (90)’

In this language the numeral data thirty (30), forty (40), fifty (50) ………. to ninety (90) collected from the native language consultant show unsystematic as far as multiplication or summation rules are applied. Devi (2010) has also put the same data *somthum* ‘thirty (30)’, sommənra ‘forty (40)’…… to *somiko* ‘ninety (90)’ in her unpublished PhD thesis. The numerals ten (10) and twenty (20) are *sum* and *somnə* respectively. However, the numeral thirty (30) is *somthum* as per the above mentioned data. Here, for instance, *som* is ‘twenty (20)’ if it is derived from the numeral *somnə* ‘twenty (20)’, and *thum* is three (3). So, the result of summation or multiplication of these two components is some other than thirty (30) i.e. 20+3 is twenty three (23) and 20x3 is sixty (60). However, when the multiplication is done with the numeral *sum* ‘ten (10)’, the correct result is found as *sum* x *thum* (10x3) = *sumthum* ‘thirty (30)’. Similarly, the pattern is applicable to the numerals from forty (40) to ninety (90). It needs to investigate that it is due to the phonological change of the vowel /u/ of *sum* ‘ten’ to /o/ of *som* when derived numerals through multiplication are expressed.

D. Tarao derived numerals through multiplication

In Tarao, the numerals twenty (20), thirty (30), forty (40), fifty (50), ……….. and ninety (90) are derived through the multiplication process of the first component that is fixed with *som* ‘ten’ and the respective basic cardinal numerals from *inni* ‘two (2)’ to *ku* ‘nine (9)’ by dropping first syllables except the numerals seven (7) and nine (9). The syllables *in*- from *inni* ‘two (2) and *inthum* ‘three (3)’; the syllable *mən*- from *mənli* ‘four (4); *rəŋ*- from *rəŋŋa* ‘five (5)’; *ku*- from *kuruk* ‘six (6)’ and *ki*- from *kirit* ‘eight (8) have been dropped as in the numeral data illustrated below:

som (10) x ni (2)	somni ‘twenty (20)’
som (10) x thum (3)	somthum ‘thirty (30)’
som (10) x li (4)	somli ‘forty (40)’
som (10) x ŋa (5)	somŋa ‘fifty (50)’
som (10) x ruk (6)	somruk ‘sixty (60)’
som (10) x siri (7)	somsiri ‘seventy (70)’
som (10) x rit (8)	somrit ‘eighty (80)’
som (10) x ku (9)	somku ‘ninety (90)’

2.2.3 Derived numerals through multiplication plus summation

Numerals from twenty one (21) to twenty nine (29) in Koireng and Tarao are derived through multiplication plus summation. Numerals from thirty one (31) to thirty nine (39) (except in

Manipuri), forty one (41) to forty nine (49), fifty one (51) to fifty nine (59) (except in Manipuri), sixty one (61) to sixty nine (69), and so on till ninety one (91) to ninety nine (99) in the present languages of study are derived through the multiplication of the first component and second numeral component. The first component which multiplies with the second component is followed by the summation of the third components. The order of this derived numerals may be structured as A x B + C (A= first component, B=second component and C=third component).

A. Manipuri derived numerals through multiplication plus summation

In Manipuri, numerals from forty one '41' to forty nine (49), sixty one (61) to sixty nine (69), seventy one (71) to seventy nine (79), eighty one (81) to eighty nine (89) and ninety one (91) to ninety nine (99) are derived through multiplication plus summation. It is found that a lexical item -*phu*- 'beat' is employed that is used as 'twenty (20) times beating' in the expressions of these numerals. Following illustrations can be considered.

ni (2) x phu 'beat' (20) + ma (1) + thoi 'more' niphumathoi 'forty one (41)'
ni (2) x phu 'beat' (20) + ni (2) + thoi 'more' niphunithoi 'forty two (42)'
ni (2) x phu 'beat' (20) + hum (3) + doi 'more' niphuhumdoi 'forty three (43)'
ni (2) x phu 'beat' (20) + məŋa (5) niphuməŋa 'forty five (45)'
ni (2) x phu 'beat' (20) + mapəl (9) niphumapəl 'forty nine (49)'

hum (3) x phu 'beat' (20) + ma (1) + thoi 'more' humphumathoi 'sixty one (61)'
hum (3) x phu 'beat' (20) + məri (4) humphuməri 'sixty four (64)'
hum (3) x phu 'beat' (20) + mapəl (9) humphumapəl 'sixty nine (69)'

hum (3) x phu 'beat' (20) + təra (10) + ma (1)+ thoi humphutəramathoi 'seventy one (71)'
hum (3) x phu 'beat' (20) + təra (10) + mapəl (9) humphutəramapəl 'seventy nine (79)'

məri (4) x phu 'beat' (20) + nipal (8) məriphunipal 'eighty eight (88)'
məri (4) x phu 'beat' (20) + mapəl (9) məriphumapəl 'eighty nine (89)'

məri (4) x phu 'beat' (20) + təra (10) + məri (4) məriphutəraməri 'ninety four (94)'
məri (4) x phu 'beat' (20) + təra (10) + təruk (6) məriphutərətəruk 'ninety six (96)'
məri (4) x phu 'beat' (20) + təra (10) + mapəl (9) məriphutəramapəl 'ninety nine (99)'

It is observed that the first syllable *ə-* of the numerals *əma* 'one', *əni* 'two' and *əhum* 'three' is dropped and immediately after that an item *thoi* 'exceed/more' is added. This pattern is followed only for the numerals *əma* 'one', *əni* 'two' and *əhum* 'three'. The numerals seventy one (71) to seventy nine (79) and ninety one (91) to ninety nine (99) consist of the result out of the multiplication (of the first component multiplier with number twenty) by adding ten (10) in the middle. The occurrence of such numerals can be examined syntactically as follows:

(19) satrə ni-phu-ma-thoi cət-khə-re
student two-beat-one-more go-DEF-PFV
'Forty one students have gone.'

(20) nupa-du cəhi hum-phu-məri su-re
man-DEM year three-beat-four complete-PFV
'The man is sixty-four years old.'

(21) lupa mari-phu-tarə pi-khə-re
student four-beat-ten give-DEF-PFV
'Ninety rupees has been given.'

(22) nupa-du cəhi hum-phu-məri su-re
man-DEM year three-beat-four complete-PFV
'The man is sixty-four years old.'

B. Moyon derived numerals through multiplication plus summation

In Moyon, numerals from thirty one (31) to thirty nine (39), forty one '41' to forty nine (49), sixty one (61) to sixty nine (69), seventy one (71) to seventy nine (79), eighty one (81) to eighty nine (89) and ninety one (91) to ninety nine (99) are derived through multiplication plus summation. The numerical expressions of these numerals are illustrated below.

sum (10) x thum (3) + ərə + ŋkhe (1) sumthum ərəŋkhe 'thirty three (31)'
sum (10) x thum (3) + ərə + nthum (3) sumthum ərənthum 'thirty three (33)'
sum (10) x thum (3) + ərə + kuruk (6) sumthum ərə kuruk 'thirty six (36)'
sum (10) x thum (3) + ərə + iko (9) sumthum ərə iko 'thirty nine (39)'

sum (10) x mənrə (4) + ərə + ruŋa (5) summənrə ərə ruŋa 'forty five (45)'
sum (10) x mənrə (4) + ərə + iko (9) summənrə ərə iko 'forty nine (49)'

sum (10) x ruŋa (5) + ərə + sərə (7) sumŋa ərə sərə 'fifty seven (57)'
sum (10) x ruŋa (5) + ərə + iko (9) sumŋa ərə iko 'fifty nine (59)'

sum (10) x kuruk (6) + ərə + irə (8) sumruk ərə irə 'sixty eight (68)'
sum (10) x kuruk (6) + ərə +iko (9) sumruk ərə iko 'sixty nine (69)'

sum (10) x sərə (7) + ərə + ruŋa (5) sumsərə ərə ruŋa 'seventy five (75)'
sum (10) x sərə (7) + ərə + iko (9) sumsərə ərə iko 'seventy nine (79)'

sum (10) x irə (8) + ərə + irə (8) sumirə ərə irə 'eighty eight (88)'
sum (10) x irə (8) + ərə + iko (9) sumirə ərə iko 'eighty nine (89)'

sum (10) x iko (9) + ərə + ŋkhət (1) sumiko ərəŋkhe 'ninety one (91)'
sum (10) x iko (9) + ərə + nnə (2) sumiko ərənnə 'ninety two (92)'
sum (10) x iko (9) + ərə + iko (9) sumiko ərə iko 'ninety nine (99)'

These structures are the outcomes of the analysis as per the systematic principles applicable to all. However, expressions made by the native language consultants show different. The same thing happens in this case also whether phonological change of the vowel /u/ of *sum*

'ten' to /o/ of *som* occurs or not when derived numerals through multiplication plus summation are expressed. The primary data are highlighted below.

somthum ərəŋkhe 'thirty three (31)'
somthum ərənthum 'thirty three (33)'
somthum ərə kuruk 'thirty six (36)'
somthum ərə iko 'thirty nine (39)'

sommənrə ərə ruŋa 'forty five (45)'
sommənrə ərə iko 'forty nine (49)'

somŋa ərə sərə 'fifty seven (57)'
somŋa ərə iko 'fifty nine (59)'

somruk ərə irə 'sixty eight (68)'
somruk ərə iko 'sixty nine (69)'

somsərə ərə ruŋa 'seventy five (75)'
somsərə ərə iko 'seventy nine (79)'

somirə ərə irə 'eighty eight (88)'
somirə ərə iko 'eighty nine (89)'

somiko ərəŋkhe 'ninety one (91)'
somiko ərənnə 'ninety two (92)'
somiko ərə iko 'ninety nine (99)'

C. Koireng derived numerals through multiplication plus summation

Numerals from twenty one (21) to twenty nine (29), thirty one (31) to thirty nine (39), forty one '41' to forty nine (49), sixty one (61) to sixty nine (69), seventy one (71) to seventy nine (79), eighty one (81) to eighty nine (89) and ninety one (91) to ninety nine (99) are derived through multiplication plus summation in Koireng. An additive marker, *-ləi* is employed to add basic numerals at the end of the product of ten (10) and the numerals from two (2) to nine (9). The first syllable i.e. *kin-* of the basic numerals from one (1) to three (3) and *ku-* of six (6) and *ki-* of seven (7) are dropped. The data below show the structural composition of the numerals derived through multiplication plus summation.

som (10) x ni (2) + ləi + khət (1) somniləikhət 'twenty one (21)'
som (10) x ni (2) + ləi + ni (2) somniləini 'twenty two (22)'
som (10) x ni (2) + ləi + ko (9) somniləiko 'twenty nine (29)

som (10) x thum (3) + ləi + thum (1) somthumləithum 'thirty three (33)'
som (10) x thum (3) + ləi + ruk (6) somthumləiruk 'thirty six (36)'
som (10) x thum (3) + ləi + ko (9) somthumləiko 'thirty nine (39)'

som (10) x minli (4) + ləi + minli (4) somminliləiminli 'forty four (44)'

som (10) x minli (4) + ləi + riŋŋa (5) somminliləiriŋŋa 'forty five (45)'
som (10) x minli (4) + ləi + ko (9) somminliləiko 'forty nine (49)'

som (10) x riŋŋa (5) + ləi + səri (7) somriŋŋaləisəri 'fifty seven (57)'
som (10) x riŋŋa (5) + ləi + ko (9) somriŋŋaləiko 'fifty nine (59)'

som (10) x ruk (6) + ləi + rijet (8) somrukləirijet 'sixty eight (68)'
som (10) x ruk (6) + ləi + ko (9) somrukləiko 'sixty nine (69)'

som (10) x səri (7) + ləi + minli (4) somsəriləiminli 'seventy four (74)'
som (10) x səri (7) + ləi + riŋŋa (5) somsəriləiriŋŋa 'seventy five (75)'
som (10) x səri (7) + ləi + ko (9) somsəriləiko 'seventy nine (79)'

som (10) x rijet (8) + ləi + rijet (8) somrijetləirijet 'eighty eight (88)'

som (10) x rijet (8) + ləi + ko (9) somrijetləiko 'eighty nine (89)'

som (10) x ko (9) + ləi + khət (1) somkoləikhət 'ninety one (91)'
som (10) x ko (9) + ləi + ni (2) somkoləini 'ninety two (92)'
som (10) x ko (9) + ləi + ko (9) somkoləiko 'ninety nine (99)'

D. Tarao derived numerals through multiplication plus summation

In Tarao, the numerals from twenty one (21) to twenty nine (29), thirty one (31) to thirty nine (39), forty one (41) to forty nine (49), fifty one (51) to fifty nine (59), sixty one (61) to sixty nine (69), and so on till ninety one (91) to ninety nine (99) are derived by the multiplication of the first component and second component. The first component (multiplicand) which multiplies with the second component (multiplier) and followed by the summation of the third components.

som (10) x ni (2) + ləi + inkhət (1) somniləiinkhət 'twenty one (21)'
som (10) x ni (2) + ləi + ini (2) somniləiini 'twenty two (22)'
som (10) x ni (2) + ləi + ku (9) somniləiku 'twenty nine (29)

som (10) x thum (3) + ləi + kirit (8) somthumləikirit 'thirty eight (38)'
som (10) x thum (3) + ləi + ku (9) somthumləiku 'thirty nine (39)'

som (10) x li (4) + ləi + inthum (3) somliləiinthum 'forty three (43)'
som (10) x li (4) + ləi + ku (9) somliləiku 'forty nine (49)'

som (10) x ŋa (5) + ləi + mənli (4) somŋaləimənli 'fifty four (54)'
som (10) x ŋa (5) + ləi + ku (9) somŋaləiku 'fifty nine (59)'
som (10) x ruk (6) + ləi + ini (2) somrukləiini 'sixty two (62)'
som (10) x ruk (6) + ləi + ku (9) somrukləiku 'sixty nine (69)'

som (10) x siri (7) + ləi + kirit (8) somsiriləikirit 'seventy eight (78)'
som (10) x siri (7) + ləi + ku (9) somsiriləiku 'seventy nine (79)'

som (10) x rit (8) + ləi + kirit (8) somritləikirit ‘eighty eight (88)’
som (10) x rit (8) + ləi + ku (9) somritləiku ‘eighty nine (89)’

som (10) x ku (9) + ləi + inkhət (1) somkuləiinkhət ‘ninety one (91)’
som (10) x ku (9) + ləi + ini (2) somkuləiini ‘ninety two (92)’
som (10) x ku (9) + ləi + ku (9) somkuləiku ‘ninety nine (99)’

It is found that such constructions of derived numerals are also common in some other Tibeto-Burman languages such as, Dimasa (Dhiren, 2013), Chothe (Brojen, 2008), Paite (Saratchandra, 2006), etc.

b) Ordinal numerals

In most of the Tibeto-Burman languages of northeast India, there is a similar characteristic feature of the ordinal numeral formation. The ordinal numerals are derived from the cardinal numerals by a morphological process of word formation called affixation. In such a process, particular morphemes are affixed to the respective cardinal numerals except the ordinal numeral ‘first’. In order to derive ordinal numerals the morpheme, *ul-* in Kokborok (Singh, 2020), *-thi* in Boro, *-ne* in Mising, *-aphaŋ* in Karbi, *-subə* in Manipuri, *-sunna* in Koireng, *ə-* and *-nə* in Moyon, *tipi* in Tarao, etc. are affixed to the respective cardinal numerals. Following examples can be considered.

Manipuri	**Koireng**	**Moyon**	**Tarao**	**Gloss**
əhanbə	əcumtək	mensə/əharpa	inkhət tipi	‘first’
ənisubə	kinnisunna	əmənnə	inni tipi	‘second’
əhumsubə	kinthumsunna	əmənthumnə	inthum tipi	‘third’
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nipalsubə	kirijetsunna	əirənə	kirit tipi	‘eighth’
------------	-----------------	---------------	-------------	--------
tərasubə	somsunna	əsumnə	som tipi	‘tenth’
------------	-----------------	---------------	-------------	--------
kunsubə	somnisunna	əsomnənə	somni tipi	‘twentieth’
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camasubə	rijakhətsunna	əcamanə	somsom tipi	‘hundredth’

It is clearly observed that all the TB languages of the present study employ a separate lexical item each for the ordinal numeral ‘first’ except Tarao. Manipuri employs *əhanbə* ‘first’, Koireng uses *əcumtək* ‘first’, Moyon employs *əharpa* ‘first’. In Manipuri, a morpheme -*subə* is suffixed to every cardinal number to form ordinal numerals. Koireng employs a morpheme -*sunna* which is directly suffixed to cardinal numerals to create ordinals without dropping any syllable. In Moyon, ordinals numerals are constituted by the simultaneous prefixation of *ə***-** and suffixation of **-***nə* to the cardinal numerals except for "first", "second" and 'third which appeared slightly distinguishing from the other ordinal numerals. For the ordinal numeral ‘*first*’ a lexical item *mensə* or *aharpa* is employed. Particularly for the ordinal numerals ‘second’ and ‘third’ a

separate prefix *əmə-* instead of *ə-* is used by dropping the initial syllable *i-*. Tarao employs a lexical item *tipi* which follows the cardinal numerals to constitute the ordinal numerals.

c) Multiplicative numerals

Different morphemes for constructing the multiplicative numerals in the present Tibeto-Burman languages of study are employed to express the answer for a question asked with 'how many times'. Morphemes like, *-rək* in Manipuri, *wəi-* in Koireng, *wə-* in Moyon and *wəi-* in Tarao are affixed to the corresponding cardinal numerals in order to construct multiplicative numerals. The following examples highlight the structures of the multiplicative numerals in these TB languages.

Manipuri	Koireng	Moyon	Tarao	Gloss
əmərək/əmukrək	wəikhət	wəkhe	wəiinkhət	'once'
ənirək	wəini	wənə	wəiinni	'twice'
əhumrək	wəithum	wəthum	wəiinthum	'thrice'
nipalrək	wəiriet	wəirə	wəikirit	'eight times'
tərarək	wəisom	wəsum	wəisom	'ten times'
kunrək	wəisomni	wəsomnə	wəisomni	'twenty times'
camarək	wəirijakhət	wəcama	wəisomsom	'hundred times'

It is observed that Manipuri employs a marker *-rək* which is suffixed to the cardinal numerals directly to constitute multiplicative numerals without deforming the phonological shapes of cardinal numerals. Koireng also uses a marker *wəi-* in the structure of multiplicative numerals. The marker *wəi-* is directly prefixed to all cardinal numerals. But the initial syllable *kin-* from 'one', 'two' and 'three' is dropped while adding this marker. In Moyon a marker *wə-* is prefixed to all cardinal numerals in the formation of multiplicative numerals. But the initial syllable *iŋ-* of 'one', *in-* of 'two' and 'three' are dropped but for the rest numerals the marker *wə-* is directed prefixed. Tarao uses a marker *wəi-* which is prefixed to all numerals to constitute multiplicative numerals without changing the phonological shapes of cardinal numerals.

3. Conclusion

The numeral systems in Tibeto-Burman languages are mainly of decimal type. However, it can come to the conclusion that some of the Tibeto-Burman languages such as, Manipuri and Moyon show the existence of vigesimal system. It is also clearly seen the similarities of numeral expressions among these languages that the roots of the numerals *-ŋa* 'five' and *-ruk* 'six' are same, Koireng and Tarao's basic numerals are same except the minimal differences of the numerals *kiriet* 'eight' vs. *kirit* 'eight' and *ko* 'nine' vs. *ku* 'nine' respectively. In case of Moyon numerals derived through multiplication, speakers' acceptance seams to overrule the expressions of numerals thirty (30), forty (40), fifty (50) ……… to ninety (90) as it shows unsystematic as far as multiplication or summation rules are applied. In the structure of ordinal numerals, it is clearly observed that all the TB languages of the present study employ a separate lexical item each for the ordinal numeral 'first' except Tarao wherein a lexical item *tipi* follows cardinal numerals to constitute ordinal structures. Multiplicative numerals employ different morphemes prefixed to the basic cardinal numerals except Manipuri wherein a suffix is used.

Abbreviations

ADM	-	Additive marker
ADV	-	Adverb
COP	-	Copula
DEIC	-	Deictic
DEF	-	Definitive
DEM	-	Demonstrative
LOC	-	Locative
PFV	-	Perfective
PL	-	Plural
PROG	-	Progressive aspect
SAM	-	Simple aspect marker

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Uniqueness of Expressives in Bodo, Deori, and Mising: A Linguistic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a detailed examination of the significance and uniqueness of expressives in the Bodo, Deori, and Mising languages. By "uniqueness," we refer to the distinctive role that expressives play in these languages, where they convey specific feelings and meanings that cannot be fully captured by substituting other words. The Bodo, Deori, and Mising languages, which belong to the Tibeto-Burman language family and are spoken primarily in Assam (with a smaller Mising population in Arunachal Pradesh), use expressives that often remain underrepresented in formal speech and grammar books. These non-dictionary words are frequently overlooked or replaced by standard dictionary terms in formal contexts, thereby losing their unique connotations. This paper aims to highlight the individuality and distinctiveness of expressives through examples from the three languages. It will explore how replacing expressives—particularly those related to sensory experiences—with dictionary words can diminish or obscure their original meaning, which cannot be fully compensated by any other term.

1. Introduction

Expressives are reduplicated words—either fully or partially—that are a fundamental feature of nearly all South Asian languages. The examples discussed here include both partial and fully reduplicated expressives. These words enhance speech in ways that are socially and culturally meaningful. Typically, expressives involve the repetition of a syllable that, on its own, lacks meaning but acquires significance when repeated. This type of morphological reduplication does not exist independently in the language; for example, the Deori word “zin” has no meaning by itself, but when repeated as “zin~zin,” it conveys the sensation of numbness in the legs.Expressives are integral to many South Asian languages. Diffloth (1972) described them as “the aesthetic complement of grammar,” noting that they enrich and enliven a language. Unfortunately, these forms are often undervalued and remain under-documented.

Expressives can function as both nouns and verbs and can take standard affixations, similar to those used with regular nouns and verbs in a given language. For example, in Bodo, Deori, and Mising, onomatopoeic words can incorporate various verbal affixations. In Deori, the

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term for "buzzing" is ***be~be-a-ni*** i.e., *IMITATIVE-CONT-PRF*. Expressives are unsung heroes of any grammar of South Asian Languages (Abbi 2021:13). Expressives can perform the function of noun and verb and take normal affixations like a normal noun and verb that is allowed in a particular language. For instance, onomatopoeia in Bodo, Deori and Mising carry along with it many verbal affixations. For instance, the word for "buzzing" in Deori is ***be~be-a-ni*** i.e., *IMITATIVE-CONT-PRF*. Expressives are often considered as a separate class of words by several linguists.

1. Expressives are a distinct category of words that convey the speaker's sensory perceptions, describing various types of experiences such as visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, haptic, and emotional sensations related to specific phenomena (Tufvesson 2007:53). In languages like Bodo, Deori, and Mising, these sensory perceptions, or *panchēndriya*, can function as predicates in sentences. Syntactically, expressives typically appear in the final position within a sentence..

2. Again Abbi (2021:13) mentioned that In earlier studies, particularly those focused on African and South Asian languages, expressives have been referred to by various terms including 'interjections,' 'descriptive adverbs,' 'picture words,' 'adverbials,' 'intensives,' 'emphatics,' and 'impressifs.

Expressives are fascinating phenomena that carry a strong intensity and are distinct from simple adjectives in a language because they possess an "iconic value" that adjectives lack. For example, when discussing reduplication to indicate the optimal degree of something, Montaut (2021:38) illustrates how expressives work using the ideal temperature for tea. A simple adjective would merely indicate that the tea is neither cold nor lukewarm, but reduplication emphasizes the tea's conformity to the ideal temperature for good tea—nicely hot, quite hot, but not too hot. This demonstrates the unique quality of expressives: they inherently convey descriptive meaning. This paper examines various types of expressives, including onomatopoeia, sensory expressions, kinship terms, and child language, analyzing their morphological structure and grammatical function in different languages.

A brief description on the four different modes of expressives
Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia	The naming of things and actions by imitating natural sounds is known as onomatopoeia. This can include the calls of birds or animals and other sounds from the natural environment. Languages such as Bodo, Deori, and Mising are particularly rich in onomatopoeic expressions. For example, in Bodo, ***zi~zi (cricket stridulating in Bodo),*** **tur~tur (croaking of frog in Deori)** ***kuk~kuk (mimics the cooing of cuckoo in Mising)***
Sense of perception	In Deori and Mising, expressions related to sensory perceptions function as verbal predicates, meaning they are used in predicate positions within sentences. Deori

	i) a-ĩ utʰu-wa sek~sek-a-ri 1SG-GEN hand-NOM EXP for acidic sensation-NF-IPFV My hand is having an acidic sensation. Mising *ii) asin-sé* ***pokkép~poglap-*** *duŋ* heart-DEF EXP for dilemma-PROG This heart is in dilemma
Kinship Terminology	In Deori and Mising, kinship terms are formed from repeated, often meaningless syllables that combine to create meaningful words in the languages. For example, the term "***babata***" means "uncle" in Mising. In these languages, many kinship terms are derived from expressives by either repeating the initial syllables exactly or through vowel changes. For instance, the word for "father" is "***baba***" in Deori and "***babu***" in Mising.
Child expressives	During the early stages of language acquisition, expressives play a crucial role in helping children adapt to a language. These include expressions used to soothe or lull a baby to sleep, comfort them when they cry, or name and describe objects around them. This makes child expressives particularly unique. For example, in Bodo, the term gʰo~gʰo" is used by a child to imply water. Again, in Deori the term "te~te" is used by children to indicate "sleep". And in Mising, the term "bum~bum" is used to imply a motorbike.

Table- 1 *Expressives and their nature*

The term "expressives" refers to the previously mentioned terms and has been used by various grammarians over time without a specific or clear definition (Abbi 1992:15). Durand (1961) was the first to coin the term "expressive" in his study of Vietnamese (Childs 1989:1). Additionally, Mary Haas (1964) included this term in her dictionary, and Childs (1994) made significant contributions to the field of expressives, particularly through his extensive work on idiophones in Africa.

2. Background of the languages

Bodo, Deori, and Mising are three Tibetan-Burman languages spoken in various districts of Assam, India. The term "Bodo" refers both to the community and their language. The Bodo population is spread across both Upper Assam and Lower Assam, primarily in the districts of Kokrajhar, Udalguri, Baksa, Sirang, Sonitpur, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, and Goalpara. Recognized as a plains tribe in Assam under the Indian Constitution's Sixth Schedule, Bodo is also one of the twenty-two languages listed in the Eighth Schedule. According to the 2011 census, there are approximately 3,155,359 Bodo speakers in Assam. As plains tribes, the Bodo people frequently interact with speakers of other languages, including Assamese, and most are multilingual.

The Deori community, another indigenous group in Assam, is primarily found in Upper Assam. They inhabit the eastern portion of Sonitpur district, as well as Jorhat, Tinsukia, Sibsagar, Dibrugarh, Dhemaji, and Lakhimpur districts. Additionally, Deori groups can also be found in Arunachal Pradesh. Currently, the Deori language is a blend of Deori and Assamese, with Assamese being the dominant language. This paper aims to preserve the Deori language, particularly its expressive elements, among the younger generation.

The term "Chutiya" has been used by some non-native scholars to refer to Deori. For example, Grierson (1903-1906) described it as "the Chutiya language, indeed, may fairly claim to be the language of Upper Assam." Similarly, Brown (1895) used the term in his work, *An Outline Grammar of Deori Chutiya Language Spoken in Upper Assam*, which includes an introduction, illustrative sentences, and a short vocabulary. According to Nath (2010:24), "Chutia" is another name for the Deori community. However, the Deori people prefer to be identified as Jimosaya, which means "the children of the sun and the moon."

While Deori speakers generally use a mix of Deori and Assamese in their daily conversations, many still use Deori regularly. Among the Deori groups, such as Tengapania, Bargoyan, and Patorgoyan, the Dibongias are notable for their use of Deori in everyday conversation. This paper includes examples of Deori data from the Dibongia group.

Mising, like the other two languages, refers to both the language and the community. However, Mising people are also known as "Miri." N.C. Pegu used the term "Miri" in his book *The Miris or Mishings of the Brahmaputra Valley* (1956). The Mising language is spoken in several districts of Assam, including Golaghat, Jorhat, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sonitpur, and Sibsagar. There is also a small Mising population in Arunachal Pradesh. Within the Mising language, there are several dialectal sub-groups, including - Pagro, Délu, Tayu-Tayé, Dambug, Doyid, Oyan, Sa:yang, and Moy:ing (Taid 2010:9).

The population[2] of Mising in Assam according to the 2011 census is 680,424, and in Arunachal Pradesh are 7,412. Let us consider a map the speakers of these languages are shown in terms of their geographical distribution. Each marked with different coloured dots for the convenient of the readers. The map below will show the geographical distribution of Bodo people in blue colour, red has been chosen for Deori and green for Mising.

Source: https://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/assam/assam-district.htm (Retrieved at 4.10 p.m on 21 January 2020)

[2] The population of Mising in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh is accessed from the link- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mising_people retrieved on 20-03-2021

***Map 1**. The area of residence of Bodo, Deori and Mising speaker*

3. Aims and Objectives of this paper

Bodo, Deori and Mising are sumptuously imbued with expressives that convey the insight of a speaker and their emotions. Therefore, the following research objectives have been listed.

- ❖ to highlight the unique characteristics of expressive morphology in Bodo, Deori, and Mising in detail.
- ❖ to demonstrate how animal calls are an integral part of these languages, with specific expressives assigned to particular animals, reflecting their unique identities.
- ❖ to contribute to the preservation and revitalization of these endangered forms.

4. Data collection process

The data were collected from informants of the three languages—Bodo, Deori, and Mising—residing in the following locations: Takankata in Baksa district for Bodo, Bordeurigaon in Narayanpur of Lakhimpur district for Deori, and Dui Nong Hati and Mara Sapori in Gogamukh of Lakhimpur district, as well as Nahar Gezera, P.O. Jonkareng in Dhemaji district for Mising. Initially, informants provided a wide range of reduplicated words. With their assistance, I later filtered out expressives from other lexically reduplicated terms. Consequently, the selected data include only those words that are generally vague and lack meaning when not repeated, such as onomatopoeic words, expressives related to sensory perception, color expressives, and manner adverbs.

5. Discussion

Expressives have distinct descriptive meanings and require no additional explanation, which contributes to their uniqueness. These descriptive meanings make expressives stand out. Based on Akita (2017: 317-321), this study aims to highlight the uniqueness of expressives in declarative, interrogative, and negative sentences in Bodo, Deori, and Mising. Let us examine some examples of onomatopoeia.

5.1 Onomatopoeia

This discussion examines the significance of animal calls in different languages. Some expressives are essential for the structure of a sentence, meaning that without them, the sentence

would lack meaning. The importance of these expressives in a sentence can be assessed by their frequency in a given context. Their usage may vary depending on the language and situation. Many onomatopoeic expressions in Bodo, Deori, and Mising are similar because they directly mimic natural sounds, a concept supported by Bodomo (2006:204), who states, "Ideophones function as phonesthemes by directly imitating natural sounds." Onomatopoeic words encompass both the call and the action of the specific animal or bird. As Trask (1993:131-132) notes, these words form a grammatically distinct class that often expresses either unique sounds or visually distinctive types of actions. To illustrate, we will look at examples of animal calls, which are all fully reduplicated, to highlight expressives that maintain their distinctiveness in specific contexts.

Bodo:

(1) *mauzì-ja* ***meu~meu*** *ɡáb-dúŋ*
cat-NOM IMI sound of mewing cry-ASP
Cat is mewing.

(2) *sɯima-ja* ***bʰwu~bʰwu*** *sɯŋ-dúŋ*
dog-NOM IMI sound of barking bark-ASP
Dog is barking.

(3) *ɡuma-ja* ***zi~zi*** *ɡáb-dúŋ*
cricket-NOM IMI cry of a cricket cry-ASP
Cricket is crying.

(4) *mainau-a* ***tʰik~tʰik*** *ɡáb-dúŋ*
lizard-NOM IMI sound of clicking cry-ASP
Lizard is clicking.

(5) *haŋsɯ-a* *hakʰor-ao* ***ɡeb~ɡeb*** *ɡábɡasinɯ*
duck-NOM pond-LOC IMI sound of quacking cry-PROG
Duck in the pond is quacking.

(6) *embu-wa* ***eb~eb*** *ɡáb-dúŋ*
frog-NOM IMI sound of croaking cry-ASP
Frog is croaking.

In Bodo, there is no specific word for most animal calls except for "-***sɯŋ***," which means "bark." The term "ɡ***ab***," meaning "cry," is used to refer to the various calls of different animals and birds. For example, "ɡ***ab***" is used for the barking of a dog, the mewing of a cat, the stridulating of a cricket, the quacking of a duck, and the croaking of a frog. This highlights the important role of expressives in describing animal calls. Without these varied expressives, the examples would appear plain or lacking in detail. The uniqueness of expressives lies in their ability to convey distinct sounds for different animals, as demonstrated by the five different expressives used in these examples. Each example illustrates how expressives bring out the essence of the sounds they represent. Let us consider these examples to further understand the impact of expressives.

(7) mauzì-ja *ɡáb-dúŋ*
cat-NOM cry-ASP
Cat is mewing.

(8) ɡuma-ja *ɡáb-dúŋ*
cricket-NOM cry-ASP
Cricket is crying.

(9) *mainau-a* *ɡáb-dúŋ*
lizard-NOM cry-ASP
Lizard is clicking.

(10) haŋsɯ-a *hak^{h}or-ao* *ɡáb-ɡasinɯ*
duck-NOM pond-LOC cry-PROG
Duck in the pond is quacking.

(11) embu-wa *ɡáb-dúŋ*
frog-NOM cry-ASP
Frog is croaking.

In examples 7 to 11, it appears that the sentences repeat the same idea with different subjects. In contrast, in examples 1 to 6, each new subject is paired with different expressives representing the calls of various animals, thereby giving each animal a unique voice and identity. This approach adds a distinctive quality to the representation of each animal's call.

Deori:

(12) zeti-ja ***tik~tik**-a-ri*
lizard-NOM IMI sound of lizard clicking-CONT-IPFV
The lizard is clicking

(13) si-ja ***bou~bou*** *tʃa* *su-ri*
dog-NOM IMI noise of barking way bark-IPFV
The dog is barking loudly.

si-ja* ***bou~bou-a-ri*
dog-NOM IMI noise of barking-IPFV
The dog is barking loudly.

(14) sitami-ja ***be~be-**a-ni*
fly-NOM IMI sound of buzzing-CONT-PRF
The fly has been buzzing.

(15) bekula-wa ***tur~tur**-a-ri*
frog-NOM IMI sound of frog croaking-CONT-IPFV
The frog is croaking.

Example (13) is unique in Deori because it has a specific word for "bark," which is "su," in addition to the imitative expression, for the clicking of a lizard, and for the croaking of a frog do not need the extra term for "cry."

In Deori, the word "uɡa" can be used in sentences alongside imitative animal sounds, similar to how it functions in Bodo. However, the structure is different in Deori because "uɡa" functions as a manner adverb. In Deori, the manner expressive "-tʃa" precedes "uɡa" in each case. This highlights a structural difference between Bodo and Deori. Despite this difference, the word "uɡa," meaning "cry," can still be used in Deori to represent the cries or calls of animals in some instances. Let us examine some examples to illustrate this usage.

(16) *zeti-ja* ***tik~tik*** *tʃa* *uga -ri*
lizard-NOM IMI sound of lizard clicking way cry-IPFV
The lizard is crying.

(17) *midige-wa* ***meu~meu*** *tʃa* *uga-ri*
cat-NOM IMI sound of mewing way cry-IPFV
The cat is mewing.

(18) *bekula-wa* ***tur~tur*** *tʃa* *uga-ri*
frog-NOM IMI sound of frog croaking way cry-IPFV
The frog is croaking

(19) **si-ja* ***bou~bou*** *tʃa* *uɡa-ri*
dog-NOM IMI noise of barking way bark-IPFV
The dog is crying.

(20) **sitami-ja* ***be~be*** *tʃa* *uɡa-ri*
fly-NOM IMI sound of buzzing way cry-IPFV
The fly is buzzing.

From these examples, it is evident that while there are multiple ways to represent the calls or cries of animals, some exceptions exist. For instance, Deori lacks a distinct word for the buzzing of a fly, and the word for "cry" in Deori, "uɡa," does not combine with "be" and "bou" in example (19). Consequently, Deori speakers use "be" and that cannot be replaced with the word for "cry" ("uɡa").

Mising:

(21) *mekaɾi-dé* ***meuŋ~ meuŋ*** *əmna* *kab-la-duŋ*
cat-DEF IMI sound of mewing manner cry-NF-EXIST
The cat is mewing.

(22) *éki-ko* ɡ***a***ɡ~ɡ***a***ɡ *əmna* *ra-duŋ*
dog-INDEF IMI sound of barking manner bark-PROG
A dog is barking.

(23) *dʒɔdʒi-dé* ***tik~tik*** *əmna* *kab-la-duŋ*

lidʒard-DEF IMI sound of lizard's clicks manner cry-NF-EXIST
The lizard is clicking.

(24) *sɔju-bí* ***kuk~kuk*** *əmna* *kab-la-duŋ*
cuckoo-CLF IMI sound of cooing manner cry-NF-EXIST
The cuckoo is singing.

(25) *ek-dé* ***kuwek~kuwek*** *əmna* *kab-la-duŋ*
pig-DEF IMI sound of grunting manner cry-NF-EXIST
The pig is crying gruntingly.

In these five examples, we observe that the calls or cries of different animals vary depending on the subject. However, a common feature across all examples is the use of the word "kab," which means "cry" in Mising. In each instance, "kab" is used alongside onomatopoeic words to denote the specific animal sound. Similarly to Bodo and Deori, where the single word "ɡab" for Bodo and "uɡa" for Deori are used to represent various animal calls except for "bark" ("sɯŋ" in Bodo and "su" in Deori), Mising also follows this pattern. The word "kab" is consistently used to indicate "crying," except in example 22, where "ra" refers to a dog's bark.

Without the onomatopoeic words associated with each animal or bird, these examples would appear as mere repetitions with different subjects. The onomatopoeic words are crucial because they capture the unique identity of each animal or bird. For instance, the sound "kuwek~kuwek" unmistakably identifies a cuckoo, and the grunting sound is clearly associated with a pig, not with a lizard or a crow.

In addition to the onomatopoeic examples previously mentioned for Bodo, Deori, and Mising, there are also expressives related to the senses. Let us now examine examples of sense-related expressives in these languages.

5.2 Sense of perceptions in Bodo

Bodo:

(26) *aŋ-ni* *pʰoŋbai-a* ***ɾaŋtʰeŋ~tʰeŋ***
1SG-GEN brother-NOM EXP for thinness
My brother is lean and thin.

(27) *aŋ-ni* *pʰoŋbai-a* ***hamkʰreŋ***
1SG-GEN brother-NOM thin
My brother is thin.

(28) *nuɯŋ-ni* *dokʰona-ja* ***zep~zep***-*tʰaɾ*
you-GEN traditional attire-NOM EXP for wetness-INT
Your dokhona is drenched.

(29) *nuɯŋ-ni* *dokʰona-ja* *ɡisi*
you-GEN traditional attire-NOM wet
Your dokhona is wet

The examples from Bodo, such as (26) and (28), clearly illustrate expressives related to the senses of vision and touch. In example (27), substituting the expressive with the dictionary word "hamkʰɾeŋ," which means "thin" in Bodo, does not convey the same meaning. The dictionary words used in place of the expressives in examples (27) and (29) have meanings close to, but not exactly the same as, the expressives. These expressives appear in predicate positions and can take affixes similar to adjectives, and they are capable of conveying their meaning independently without the need for additional adjectives.

Next, let us examine some Deori examples related to sensory experiences where expressives have a distinct role in the language. These expressives cannot be replaced with any other words without losing their specific meaning. For instance,

Deori:

(30) ɡumo-wa ***tiŋ~tiŋ****-a-ni*
head-NOM EXP for twinge-CONT-PRF
My head has twinged.

The expressive in this example cannot be replaced with any other word. To describe a sudden, intense pain in the head, a native Deori speaker uses "tiŋ~tiŋ" and if it is substituted with "sari," which means "pain" in Deori, it would not convey the same specific sense of sharp, sudden pain. Thus, "tiŋ~tiŋ" represents a unique way of expressing this type of pain that cannot be accurately substituted with non-expressive terms like "sari."

For instance,

(31) a-ĩ ɡumo-wa sa-ri
1SG-GEN head-NOM pain-IPFV
My head is aching.

Let us consider some more instances relating to the sense where expressives have their own individuality in the language.

(32) a-ĩ utʰu-wa ***bom~bom****-a-ni*
1SG-GEN hand-NOM EXP for burning sensation-CONT-PRF
My hand has been having a burning sensation.

(33) a-ĩ utʰu-wa sowã-ri
1SG-GEN hand-NOM burn-IPFV
My hand is burning.

(34) a-ĩ utʰu-wa ***sek~sek****-a-ri*
1SG-GEN hand-NOM EXP for acidic sensation-CONT-IPFV
My hand is having an acidic sensation.

(35) a-ĩ utʰu-wa sa-ri
1SG-GEN hand-NOM pain-IPFV

My hand is having an acidic sensation. / is paining.

(36) *a- ĩ* *sou-wa* ***pir~pir**-a-ri.*
1SG-GEN body-NOM EXP for tickle-CONT-IPFV.
My body is tickling.

(37) *a- ĩ* *sou-wa* *mudu-ri*
1SG-GEN body-NOM EXP for tickle-IPFV.
My body is itching.

(38) *a- ĩ* *apa-su-wa* ***zin~zin**-a-ni*
1SG-GEN leg-CLF-NOM EXP for numb-CONT-PRF
My leg is in pain.

(39) *a- ĩ* *apa-su-wa* *sa-ri*
1SG-GEN leg-CLF-NOM pain-IPFV
My leg is paining

(40) *a- ĩ* *utuŋ-wa* ***ɡur~ɡur**-a-ri*
1SG-GEN stomach-NOM IMI sound of grumbling-CONT-IPFV
My stomach is growling/rumbling.

(41) *a- ĩ* *utuŋ-wa* *sa-ri*
1SG-GEN stomach-NOM pain-IPFV
My stomach is paining

In each case, these words are precisely suited to their contexts. Replacing them with different words results in a different meaning. For example, in (31), substituting the expressive ***tiŋ~tiŋ*** is replaced by the word ***sa*** and this has altogether changed the meaning from "twinging" to "aching" and the word used for aching is not an expressive, whereas the word used for twinging is an expressive. Again, in example (32) the expressive ***bom~bom*** has been replaced by the dictionary Deori word *sowã* in example (33) which means "burn". It is only through expressive that particular sensation can be expressed, replacing the expressive with other dictionary word can also lead to change in meaning. This is true in case of the other examples as well, there is no other dictionary words with the same meaning to replace the expressive from (34) to (37) i.e., ***sek~sek, pir~pir, zin~zin, bom~bom, sek~sek, pir~pir,*** and ***ɡur~ɡur***. Although there are no other dictionary words having similar meanings like these expressives, however, if we replace them with the Deori word for "pain" i.e., ***sa*** in example (35), (39) and (41) and the word -mudu which means "itching" in Deori as in example (37). We will find that they behave like verbs taking normal verbal affixations. Although in some cases the expressives can be replaced with some other expressives belonging to the same semantic field. For instance, the expressive ***ɡur~ɡur*** which is used to mean the growling or rumbling of the stomach can be replaced with the expressive ***ɡuruŋ~ɡuruŋ*** which is used in case of rumbling of the clouds. There is a connection between ***ɡur~ɡur*** and ***ɡuruŋ~ɡuruŋ*** as these words as the former refers to the sound made by the stomach, while the latter refers to the sound made by clouds, thus forming

an association between two different things one being animate, and the other being inanimate through one common connection i.e., their meaning or the concept of “rumbling”.
Let us consider some examples from Mising.

Mising:

(42) *teda-teda-la* *alən* ***sipit~sitap**-kaŋ*
sitting and sitting-ADV leg EXP for a prickling sensation-PST
Prolonged sitting made my leg numb.

(43) *tjublait-dé* ***mitji~mitsal*** *duŋ*
tubelight-DEF EXP for flickering EXIST
The tubelight is flickering.

(44) *ŋo-ké* *tukku-sí* ***jik~jik*** *əila* *ki-la-duŋ*
1SG-GEN head-CLF EXP for twingeing manner pain-NF-EXIST
My head is twinging”.

Again, these three examples are all related to the senses and the expressives used in each case cannot be replaced for any other expressives in the language i.e., there is no alternative for the words ***sipit~sitap***, ***mitji~mitsal*** or ***jik~jik***. If we replace the words by some non-expressive words, the meaning of the sentence changes altogether.

For instance, the word for twinging in Mishing is ***jik~jik,*** if we replace this expressive for the word “pain” which is ***ki*** in Mising, for instance,

(45) *ŋo-ké* *tukku-sí* *ki-duŋ*
1SG-GEN head-CLF pain-PROG
My head is aching.

We have seen in this example that it changes the meaning of the sentence to some extent as there is a difference between the two words “pain” and “twinge” where the twinge means a sudden sting of pain. The expressive ***jik~jik*** carries a sense of pain that is stinging or pricking at the same time.

5.3 Kinship Terminology

Kinship terms define the relationships people have within a family. Kinship can be understood as the societal bonds that establish and define these relationships. These terms are among the first that children learn during their early language development. Consequently, kinship terms are foundational and are typically some of the first words children acquire at home. Kinship terminology is present in all three languages: Bodo, Deori, and Mising. As Jeanette (2000:27) explains, "Kinship encompasses the connections people recognize through shared elements such as blood, genes, flesh, or bone. It also highlights how social relationships are created and maintained through care and effort, which can vary historically and culturally. This concept helps in understanding all types of relationships, not just familial ones."

In Bodo, kinship terms follow a different pattern compared to Deori and Mising, and they are not expressive in nature. For example, in Bodo, the term for "father" is *apʰa*, "mother" is *ai*, "grandfather" is *abwu*, and "grandmother" is *abwi*. In these Bodo kinship terms, the first syllable is not repeated, either fully or partially, but is instead followed by a different vowel or consonant.

In contrast, in Deori and Mising, kinship terms often do involve reduplication. Therefore, this section will focus on examples of kinship terminology in Deori and Mising that are expressive due to their use of reduplicated forms. This aligns with Abbi's observations (2001:163; 2018:12) that kinship terms are considered expressive when they appear in reduplicated forms.

Deori kinship Terms	English Terms.
bebe	elder sister.
zizi	Grandmother
Pizi	son-in-law
bɑbɑ	Father
jɔkɔ/ jɔjɔ	Mother

***Table- 2** Kinship terms in Deori*

Let us consider some Mising examples that are expressives in nature.

Mising kinship Terms	English terms.
1. bɑ:bu/ ba:bo	Father
2. nɑ:nɜ/ na:né	Mother
3. tɑ:tɔ/ tɔ: tɔ	Father’s father, mother’s father, father’s sister’s
4. jɑ:jɔ/ jɔ: jɔ	grandmother (father’s mother, mother’s mother, father’s sister’s mother-in-law)
5. mɑ:mɔ	elder brother’s wife, wife’s elder sister, maternal uncle’s daughter, father’s sister daughter who is elder than the speaker.
6. sa:si	(Elder) sister, brother.
7. nji:nji	aunt
8. ma:mo	Sister-in-law

***Table- 3** Kinship terms in Mising*

In Deori and Mising, many kinship terms consist of either two identical syllables or slight phonological variations in the following syllable. This pattern is not observed in Bodo, where kinship terms do not follow this reduplication pattern. Additionally, there are no alternative kinship terms in Deori and Mising; hence, the role of expressives is particularly notable. In these languages, the first syllable of a kinship term on its own does not carry meaning; instead, meaning is derived from the combination of the first syllable with the repeated or altered second syllable

5.4 Expressives used in case of children

Abbi (2018:14; 2021:17) highlighted expressions from Trangkhul Naga used to calm babies. Similarly, there are various expressions used with children in Bodo, Deori, and Mising. In Bodo, these expressions are fully reduplicated and often aspirated. Children cannot easily replace these expressions with alternative phrases, as doing so would make the communication more complex and less effective for a child learning a new language. Adults also use these expressions when interacting with children who are acquiring a new language. Therefore, these child-directed

expressions are expressive by nature and represent a distinctive feature of these languages. Let us examine some examples from Bodo, Deori, and Mising.

Bodo child expressions	Gloss
1. tʰliŋ~tʰliŋ	bell ringing
2. kʰɾiŋ~kʰɾiŋ	phone/ phone ringing
3. tʰik~ tʰik	lizard and its clicking
4. zʰe~zʰe	prohibit from touching something dirty
5. gʰo~gʰo	expressive for water
6. gʰa~gʰa	used for naming crow
7. gʰup~gʰup	imitation for boxing
8. ohohoho	expression used in quieting babies

Table-4 *Child expressives in Bodo*

Let us consider some Deori expressions used by children

Child expressions in Deori	Gloss
1. zok~zok	running train (often found in kids rhymes book)
2. bo~bo	expressive for naming bike
3. te~te	expressive for sleepiness
4. ma~ma	expressive for food
5. gu~gu	expressive for bike
6. ta~ta	expressive for naming duck
7. tik~tik	expressive for naming lizard

Table- 5 *child expressives in Deori*

From the above examples it is seen that child expressives in Deori follow the CVC or the CV pattern. Let us consider some Mising expressions used by children.

1. bum~bum	expressive for motor vehicle
2. kiki~ri	expressive for naming cock
3. kok~kok	expressive for naming hen
4. dap~dap	expressives for baby footsteps
5. bor~bor	expressives for teardrops of baby
6. haum~haum	expressive for naming a lion and his call.
7. Ombe~ombe	expressive for naming a cow and its call

Table-6 *child expressives in Mising*

Child expressives in Bodo Deori and Mising not only depict the action but also used in naming certain objects by a child. Therefore, in this regard as well the individuality of expressives is to be considered as significant.

6. Conclusion

Based on the discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Expressives cannot be replaced by dictionary words while retaining the same meaning. If substituted, they often fail to convey the exact sense or meaning, as demonstrated in examples (26), (27), and (29) from Bodo, (30) to (34) from Deori, and (39) from Mising. Bodo differs from Deori in that it lacks a separate word for manner adverbs like the Deori word "tʃa," which precedes "*uɡa* " meaning "cry" in Deori. Again animal calls can be represented in two ways: through the manner of calling or the specific call of the animal. Bodo does not have this distinction. In Deori, replacing expressive words with dictionary terms diminishes the original meaning of expressions related to sensory perceptions, such as prickling, numbness, or acidity. These unique expressives cannot be adequately substituted by other words. Across the three languages, the term for "cry" remains consistent for most animals, except for dogs. For dogs, the terms used are "sɯŋ" in Bodo, "su" in Deori, and "ra" in Mising. This suggests a closer, more specific linguistic distinction for the sound made by dogs in each language. Also, Mising, like Bodo, uses onomatopoeic words to show manners but also includes the term "kab," meaning "cry," for all animals. This feature is similar to Bodo's approach. Apart from that in Bodo, Deori and Mising, the word for cry is *ɡab, uɡa* and *kab* respectively which is used in cases of all the animals except for dog. In case of dog, it is *suŋ, su, and ra in* Bodo, Deori and Mising respectively. This probably might be the degree of proximity or closeness with dogs which might have possibly resulted in an independent word for dogs' crying in all the three languages. Also, a salient feature of Deori onomatopoeia is that they take affixation like other normal words, whereas this feature is absent in case of Bodo and Mising onomatopoeia. In addition to that in case of expressions used by child, the animal is often identified and named by its call or cry. Again, child expressions are not only used by children, but also by adults to communicate with them. Also, In the examples mentioned above one can find that most of the sentences are used in the informal sense. It can also be said that idiophones in Bodo, Deori and Mising are also used in informal conversations.

Abbreviations

ADV	adverb	EXIST	existence
ASP	aspect	GEN	genitive
CLF	classifier	IMI	imitative
CONT	continuous	INDEF	indefinite
DET	determiner	IPFV	imperfective
EXP	expressives	LOC	locative
NOM	nominative	PST	past
NF	nonfinite	SG	singular
PROG	progressive		
PRF	perfective		

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The Pronominal System of Dhundhari

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A B S T R A C T

Pronoun is a type of word that functions as noun substitutes and they can have the same number, gender, and case markings as nouns. Pronouns are divided into several subsets: indefinite, reflexive, demonstrative, interrogative, and personal pronouns. In Dhundhari, there are subject and object pronouns that are categorized for three persons and two numerals. Personal pronouns are not gender sensitive in first and second person but in third person. Different inflectional markers can be suffixed to the personal pronouns. Gender is marked in the vowel at the word final position. Reflexivity is marked by the agentive pronoun kʰʊɖ ‘self’ and possessive reflexive pronoun apɳo ‘self’. The demonstrative pronoun makes a distinction for spatial distance on two levels. Another way to differentiate them is with a two-tier number system. Dhundhari has root forms /ʤo/, /ʤi/ or /ʤa for relative pronouns. Different morphemes are suffixed to these root forms based on different uses in relative clauses, based on various factors including animacy. All the interrogative pronouns are person as well as object specific in Dhundhari. The language also has indefinite pronouns such as koi ‘anyone’, dusro ‘someone else’etc.

1. Introduction

Dhundhari [dʱʊndʱaɾi] often known as Jaipuri is an under-studied language that belongs to the western Indo-Aryan language family spoken by a group of people native to the Dhundhar region of Rajasthan, India. The language has around 1.5 million speakers (Census, 2011). It is the second widely spoken variety of Rajasthani group of languages after Marwari. Ethnologue (Lewis, 2009) classifies Dhundhari as Indo-Aryan, belonging to the central zone. The term Jaipuri was mentioned by Grierson in the Linguistic Survey of India. The language comes under the subgroups of Rajasthani, which is used as an umbrella term for all the languages spoken in Rajasthan. The language is predominantly spoken in Jaipur, Dausa, Tonk, Sawai Madhopur, Gangapur City, and Dudu. According to the natives, the region that is known as Dhundhar region or Dhundhar Pradesh is surrounded by a mountain named Dhundhakriti. Subsequently the variety spoken by the native people of that region is known as Dhundhari. Another opinion holds that the term ‘Dhundhari’ comes from the river ‘Dhund’ [dʱʊnd] that flows through the region. So the language’s name is directly derived from the name of the river and termed as ‘Dhundhari’. The present paper is an attempt to discuss the pronominal system of Dhundhari emphasizing on the pronouns and their subsets by focusing on the morphosyntactic patterns. The various forms of pronouns in Dhundhari exhibit distinct subclasses. Different subsets of pronouns which are

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being focused are: personal, demonstratives, reflexives, relative pronouns, interrogative and indefinite pronouns. Pronouns are an important part of lexicon and they are categorised under the functional words. They play an important role to avoid the repetition of the nouns in speech. Pronominal roots are limited in numbers. For a given pronoun, antecedent exists in the preceding text. A pronoun is a whole noun phrase rather than just a substitute for a noun. Nouns always refer to the third person whereas pronouns can be used in all the positions/persons.

1.1 Organization of the Study

There are four parts in this paper. The paper starts by giving a succinct overview of the language and the linguistic background. An understanding of pronouns and how they function in a language is also provided in the first part. The literature review, objective of the study, and the research methodology are all covered in the second section. The study's discussion and the findings are presented in part three. A summary of the conclusion is included in the fourth part of the paper.

2. Literature Review

George Abraham Grierson is one of the earliest linguists who has worked on Dhundhari along with some other Rajasthani dialects. Grierson has included Rajasthani and Gujarati in the Linguistics Survey of India (1908) Vol IX, part II, where he gave a brief analysis of the pronominal system of Dhundhari. Lakhan Gusain's works are considered as prominent works in Rajasthani language and its Dialects. Gusain has written grammatical descriptions of Shekhawati (2001) and Dhundari (2005) which focuses on the sociolinguistic situation, language identity, and brief grammatical sketch of the language. 'Bharatiya Bhasha Lok Sarvekshan' or 'Peoples Linguistic Survey of India' Vol. 26 has included 'The Languages of Rajasthan' (2014), edited by Madan Meena & Suraj Rao. This book has included 30 Rajasthani languages in 30 chapters where they included Dhundhari in chapter VIII. A sociolinguistic survey on Dhundhari along with Shekhawati has been done by Theodor Gipson Benjamin and Liahey Ngwazah as a part of the sociolinguistic survey series of Several Rajasthani dialects, entitled 'Sociolinguistic survey of selected Rajasthani speech varieties of Rajasthan, India Volume 5: Dhundari and Shekhawati'(2012). In 'Rajasthani Bhasha Shastra' (2011), Dr. Govind Shankar Sarma has discussed the four dialects of Rajasthani- Marwari, Mewari, Dhundhari and Hadauti. Sonam Meena's doctoral dissertation 'Acoustic Study of Vowels in Dhundhari' (2020) is an acoustic analysis on the variations in the pronunciation of vowels among the speakers of Dausa, Sawai Madhopur, and Jaipur. S. Meena has worked on a research paper 'Reduplication in Dhundhari and Adi' (2019) which focuses on the typological analysis of these two languages which belong to two entirely different language families of South-Asia. In the research paper 'A Comparative Study between Dhundhari and Shekhawati Stemming: Case of Very Closely Related Languages' (2024) Verda Pareek and Nisheeth Joshi attempted to demonstrate and contrast the stemming accuracy of Dhundhari and Shekhawati.

3. Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

(a) To classify the types of pronouns in Dhundhari and their morphosyntactic patterns

(b) To find out how the different grammatical categories are involved with different types of pronouns to build the morphological and syntactic structures of the language

4. Rationale of the Study

Pronouns are words we use in our speech as an alternative to nouns. Pronouns also refer to entities in the world. "Pronouns are free forms (as opposed to affixes) that function alone to fill the position of a noun phrase in a clause" (Payne, 1997:43). Pronouns are important as they substitute the nominal group, but fail to give a descriptive content of the same. There are various subgroups of pronouns including Personal Pronouns, Demonstratives, Reflexive Pronouns, and Relative Pronouns etc. All the pronouns encode themselves in different grammatical categories including number, person and gender. Rather than that, pronouns get their grammatical meaning from the case markers. Determining pronoun inflections and their morphosyntactic patterns is the primary goal of this study.

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Data Collection

For this analysis, primary data are collected from the native speakers of Dhundhari through structured and semi structured interviews. Informants were asked questions and given questionnaires and both open ended and closed ended questions were asked. No focus is made on the variables such as age, gender, social status, and the linguistic background is not being emphasized much, however participants are from different age groups (from 22-50) and both the male and female participants engaged in various professions participated.
For the secondary data, researchers have collected data from the existing literature. However, the amount of the secondary data collected for the study is very limited in number; since very few works have been done since date.

5.2 Data Analysis

Both descriptive and qualitative study is adopted for the data analysis based on real speech data spoken by the native speakers of Dhundhari. The data has been transcribed phonetically by using International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Phonemic transcription was not focused much as this study is limited to morphosyntactic analysis of the pronouns. Glossing is done by using the Leipzig Glossing Rules (revised version, February 2008).

6. Discussion and Research Findings

6.1 Personal Pronouns

The most frequently occurring pronouns are personal pronouns. Dhundhari recognizes a three-level of person distinction. First person is the speaker, second person is the addressee, and the third person includes others who are not in first and second person. "The category of person is clearly definable with reference to the notion of participant roles: the first person is used by the speakers to refer to themselves as a subject of discourse; the second person is used to refer to the hearer; and the third person is used to refer to persons or things other than the speaker and hearer" (Lyons, 1968: 276). Additionally, second person personal pronouns impose the feature of honorificity in most of the Indo-Aryan languages. This characteristic is absent in Dhundhari. The speakers use the same term for the second person despite the age group of the addressee. The social context in which the language is used including other sociolinguistic factors might be the reason why speakers do not use different terms for the second person based on honorificity.

Pronouns in Dhundhari exhibit a great deal of complexity. Different grammatical features including person, number, and gender as well as case markers can reflect in pronouns. Dhundhari distinguishes two numbers: singular and plural & two forms: direct and oblique. They are

morphologically marked for person and number. Gender is marked in third person singular form of personal pronouns.

6.1.1 Personal Pronoun: Direct Form

Personal pronouns in direct forms are in nominative form. The direct case is assigned with a nominal phrase which is not followed by a postposition. Dhundhari does not have any overt nominative marker. Table 1 and Table 2 show the personal pronouns in both singular and plural forms respectively.

Person	Pronoun	Gloss	Proximity
1st	mə	I	
2nd	tu	You	
3rd	o a bo ba	He She He She	Proximal Proximal Distal Distal

Table 1: *Personal Pronoun in Singular form*

Person	Pronoun	Gloss	Proximity
1st	m^hə(Incl) apa (Excl)	We We	
2nd	t^he	You all	
3rd	e be	They They	Proximal Distal

Table 2: *Personal Pronoun in Plural form*

"The most common number distinctions are singular vs. plural; less common are singular, dual, and plural" (Payne, 1997). Dhundhari exhibits three distinct forms for three distinct people and two tiers of a number system. In personal pronouns, gender is only marked in third person singular form; whereas it is unmarked in plural personal pronouns. Different terms are used for third person to show the proximity in both the singular and plural form. Personal pronoun in plural form for first person has two forms m^hə 'we' i.e. inclusive (Incl.) and apa 'we' i.e.. the exclusive (Excl.). The inclusive pronoun apa 'we' is used when the speaker and the others are members of the same group. On the other hand, whenever two or more individuals discuss themselves with someone who is not a member of the group, they employ the exclusive pronoun m^hə 'we'. All the pronouns functioning as the subject are unmarked for the Nominative case. Speakers only use a single term to address the second person. However, another variety of Rajasthani i.e. Marwari shows three different forms to address the second person. Mukherjee's findings show the three-level of division of second person based on the degree of honorificity in Marwari.

SG	PL
thũ (ordinary)	thE (ordinary)
thẼ (honorific)	thẼ (honorific)
ap (honorific)	ap (honorific)

***Table 3**: Three-level Distinction of Personal Pronouns for Second Person in Marwari (Mukherjee, 2013)*

This division is based on the degree of respect. But Dhundhari does not show any distinction in second person personal pronouns. Despite the variables like age, social status, and position of the addressee, the speakers use single terms tu 'You' and t^he 'You' to address the person in the singular and plural forms respectively.

6.1.2 Personal Pronouns: Oblique Form

In Dhundhari, certain personal pronouns have inflected forms in which the case inflections are then suffixed. Oblique forms can take the case inflections other than the nominative. These oblique forms are the bases for the inflected words. These base forms get their meaning from the different inflectional markers. The oblique base forms in Dhundhari are listed below:

Person	Base	Gloss
$_1$st	mə	'I'
$_2$nd	tə	'You
$_3$rd	bə	It/That

***Table 4**: Personal Pronouns in Singular Oblique Form*

Person	Base	Gloss	Proximity
$_1$st	m^ha (Excl.) apa (Incl.)	We We	
$_2$nd	t^ha	You all	
$_3$rd	ã be	They They	Proximal Distal

***Table 5**: Personal Pronoun in Plural Oblique Form*

6.1.3 Case Inflections in Pronouns

Case markers show the relationships among the arguments of a verb. Dhundhari exhibits three case forms for: Direct, oblique and vocative. All pronouns are inflected for number and case. The inflection can be seen at the phoneme level. The noun phrase in direct form is used without a postposition, whereas in oblique case postpositions are used after the nominal phrase. Below are the case markers found in Dhundhari:

Case	Markers
Nominative Accusative	Ø
Dative Ablative Possessive	nə nə su
Locative	ɾo,ɾi mə,paɾ

***Table 6**: Case Markers in Dhundhari*

These case markers are inflectional markers that get suffixed to the nouns and pronouns. Table 7 shows how these case markers work with the pronouns in Dhundhari:

Person	Forms	Singular	Plural
1st	Direct Oblique	mə mənə	mʰə mʰanə (Excl) apanə (Incl)
2nd	Direct Oblique	tu tənə	tʰe tʰanə
3rd	Direct Oblique	o a bo ba iɳə biɳə	e e be be aɳə baɳə

***Table** 7: Case Inflection in Oblique Form*

Dhundhari accusative and dative case markers are homophones. nə is the dative case marker which is being suffixed to the personal pronouns to show the relationship among the arguments of the verb. This is the oblique form of personal pronoun.

1. mə rozinɑː suɑːrh beːgo uːʈʰuː cʰu
   I.NOM always morning early get COP.1
   I always get up early in the morning.'
2. (a) *mə ɽoʈi kʰaɳi chə
   I chapatti eat.F COP
   'I want to eat chapati.'
   (b) mənə ɽoʈi kʰaɳi chə
   I.OBL chapatti eat.F COP
   'I want to eat chapati.'

In 1 the personal pronoun mə 'I' is in direct nominative form where the nominative case marker is not overtly marked as it has no overt form. It is not an agentive pronoun. 2(a) is a syntactically correct but grammatically incorrect sentence since it fails to show the argument relationship. In 2(b), the use of the case marker shows the relationship between the subject and the direct object.

6.1.3.1 Vocative Form

Vocatives usually sit before the noun. Vocative case is used directly to address a person. Dhundhari nouns show the vocative forms of cases but pronouns do not have any use of it.

3. (a) o choɾa (Noun)
   VOC boy 'Hey boy'

   (b) *o bo (Pronoun)
   VOC he 'Hey he'

In 3(a), o is directly addressing the noun choɾa 'boy'. The vocative form oand the noun agree with each other. But this is incompatible in case of pronouns. Vocative markers fail to

establish any relation with the pronouns. They don't agree with each other. Therefore, 3(b) is ill-formed as the vocative and the pronouns can't make an agreement.

6.2 Demonstrative Pronouns

When a speaker refers to a specific entity, they do so by using demonstrative pronouns. Dhundhari uses a two-tier system for demonstrative pronouns in order to show the proximity. When referring to the entities that are farther away from the speaker, speakers use distal or remote demonstrative pronouns and proximate ones to denote those that are closer to the speakers. With demonstrative pronouns, number sensitivity also holds true. The following table lists the differences between the several demonstrative pronouns in Dhundhari. Gender also has an influence on demonstrative pronouns. Some of the demonstrative pronouns are homophonous to the personal pronouns.

Number	Masculine	Gloss	Feminine	Gloss	Proximity
Singular	o jo	This This	a ja	This This	Proximal Proximal
	bo	That	ba	That	Distal
Plural	e je	These These	e je	These These	Proximal Proximal
	be	Those	be	Those	Distal

Table 8*: Demonstrative Pronouns in Dhundhari*

Demonstrative pronouns always refer to the third person. To show the less distance or the object that is near to the speaker, Dhundhari exhibits different forms: o 'this' or jo 'this' for singular masculine and a 'this' or ja 'this' for singular feminine. To convey the entity's distance, the demonstratives bo 'that' and ba 'that' stand for male and female, respectively.

4. (a) o c^{h}oɾa (c) a c^{h}oɾa
   'This boy' 'This girl'
   (b) bo c^{h}oɾa (d) ba c^{h}oɾi
   'This boy' 'That girl'

Gender is not marked in plural form of demonstratives but number is marked. For proximal demonstrative pronoun e 'these' or je 'these' and for distal demonstrative pronoun be 'those' is used.

5. (a) e c^{h}oɾo (b) e c^{h}oɾija
   'These boys' 'These girls'

6.3 Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns show the ownership or possession over something or someone. It shows the grammaticality and the relationship between the possessor and the possessum. The use of the possessive case marker shows the relationship between the possessor and the possessed entity. The possessive case inflections are being suffixed to the personal pronouns. Dhundhari has different possessive pronouns for different numbers and gender.

Number	Pronoun	Gloss	Inflection	Gender of the Entity
1st	mʰaɾo mʰaɾi/mʰaɾɭi	My My	ɾo ɾi/ɭi	M F
2nd	tʰaɾo tʰaɾi	Yours Yours	ɾo ɾi	M F
3rd	biko biki	His Her	ko ki	M/F M/F

***Table 9:** Dhundhari Possessive Pronouns in Singular Form*

Number	Pronoun	Gloss	Inflection	Gender of the Entity
1st	mʰako mʰaki	Our Our	ko ki	M F
2nd	tʰako tʰaki	Yours Yours	ko ki	M F
3rd	bako baki	Their Their	ko ki	M/F M/F

***Table 10**: Dhundhari Possessive Pronouns in Plural Form*

For the singular form of first and second person possessive pronoun the inflectional marker is ɾo, ɾi, and ɭi and for the others the inflectional marker is ko and ki.

6. (a) mʰaɾo bhai 'My brother'
   (b) maɾi beɳa/ mʰaɭi beɳa 'My sister'

Possessive pronouns must agree with the gender of the possessed entity. The gender is distinguished in the use of possessive inflections. The gender is marked in the vowel that is in the word ending position. This change occurs at the phoneme level. Vowel o at the word final position indicates the gender as masculine and i as feminine.

6.4 Reflexive Pronouns

All the reflexive pronouns are reflexions of the subject in a sentence, or simply, reflexive pronoun refers back to the subject. Syntactic configurations are important for determining an antecedent binding relation and limitations. The antecedent of the reflexive pronouns exists in the preceding text. The antecedent and the reflexive pronoun need to be in an agreement relationship to construct the meaning of the sentence. For that, the features of the antecedent and the reflexive pronoun such as number and gender should match. If there is a mismatch, then it will not be able to provide a valid meaning.

Dhundhari has two types of reflexive pronouns: Agentive and Possessive. The speakers use the agentive reflexive pronoun kʰʊɖ'self' and Possessive reflexive pronoun is apɳo 'self'. Agentive reflexive is always followed by a postposition.

7. (a) kʰʊɖ 'self'+ sũ (PosP)
   (b) kʰʊɖ 'self'+ nə (PosP)
   mə kʰʊd sũ kʰaɳo baɳau cʰu
   I self INST food cook.PRES COP.1
   'I cook food by myself.'

The reflexive pronoun kʰʊd 'self' can not sit the subject position. mə 'I' is the antecedent of the reflexive pronoun kʰʊd 'self'. These two pronouns are referring to the same entity, hence co-indexed.

Possessive relative pronoun is apɳo 'self' is inflected to number and gender of the object but it does not agree with the subject.

8. (a) apɳo kʰaɳo (Object: M) 'My food'
   (b) apɳi gaɖi (Object: F) 'My car'
   (c) mə apɳo kʰaɳo baɳau cʰu
   I self food cook.PRES COP.1
   'I cook my own food'

The possessive reflexive pronoun apɳo 'self' does not agree to the gender and number of the subject i.e. mə 'I' in 9(c). Instead it constructs an agreement with the object i.e. kʰaɳo 'food' in the example. Gender agreement is significantly influenced by the vowel o and i at the word final position.

6.5 Relative Pronouns

The function of the relative clauses is similar to adjectives. "A relative clause in a subordinate clause in which the embedded predicate may be [+Finite] or [-Finite]" (Subbarao, 2012:263). In Dhundhari, relative-correlative clauses and finite relative clauses use relative pronouns to relativize a sentence. Non-finite relative clauses do not contain any relative pronouns.

For Relative Pronoun, Dhundhari has the base forms /ʤo/, /ʤi/ or /ʤa/. These base forms have several inflectional markers suffixed to them, which must agree to the attributes of the entity, including number, gender, and animacy. However, the use of the inflectional markers is not obligatory.

Base	Inflection	Relative Pronoun	Gloss
ʤa ʤa ʤo ʤa ʤa ʤi	ki ko ko ta ka ã	ʤaki ʤako ʤoko ʤata ʤaka ʤiã	who, that who, that who, that whom, that whom whom, what
ʤi	n	ʤin	whom

Table 11: *Relative Pronouns in Dhundhari*

9. (a) o cʰoɾo ʤako mʰaɾe saɾ baitjo cʰa
   DEM boy who my side sit.PROG COP.3
   'The boy who is sitting by my side'

   (b) a xaɹoni kitab ʤaki a cʰoɹi padʰai cʰa
   DEM green book which DEM girlsit.PROG COP.3
   'The green book that he is reading'

In 10 (a) & 10 (b) ʤa is the base form where the inflectional marker ko and ki are is suffixed. The similar instance can be seen in the vowel in the word final position in inflected marker where vowel o changes to i to indicate the gender change. Relative pronouns ʤiã 'whom/what' and ʤin 'whom' are mostly used in relative-correlative clauses.

6.6 Interrogative Pronouns

Interrogative words are categorised under the pronoun. Interrogative pronouns take the position of a noun in a question. They can be divided further into two types: Personal (P) and impersonal (IMP). Below are some of the Dhundhari interrogative pronouns:

Word	Gloss	Type
kʊɳ kai kəsja kəsja kət̪ t̪a kat̪ro kəɖ kəija	Who What How Which How many How much When Many	P IMP IMP IMP IMP IMP IMP IMP

***Table 12**: Interrogative Pronouns in Dhundhari*

Only [+animate] objects can be refereed with the interrogative pronoun kʊɳ 'who'. Other personal

Only the personal pronoun kʊɳ 'who' is used with only [+animate] things, while other pronouns are used with [-animate] things.

10. bo kʊɳ cʰə
    he who COP.3 'Who is he'
11. tu kʊɳsju bat kər ɾəjo cʰo
    you who OBL talk do exist.PROG COP.2.PST
    'Whom were you talking to.'

6.7 Indefinite Pronouns

Indefinite pronouns do not refer to any particular entity, hence it is sub categorised as indefinite pronoun. These are non-specific determiners. Some of the indefinite pronouns in Dhundhari are koi 'someone', sagla 'everyone', dusro 'someone else', ik-duza 'one another' etc.

7. Conclusion

This study examines the pronominal categories of Dhundhari.Pronouns in Dhundhari come in a variety of forms: personal, possessive, reflexive, relative, interrogative, and indefinite. The nature of these pronouns is very inflectional. Pronouns in the direct form take the nominative case, which has no overt form. Oblique forms can be marked with cases, other than the nominative, but not in the vocative form. Understanding oblique forms and their inflections is quite difficult. Dhundhari pronouns are number and gender sensitive. Vowels play a vital role in pronouns and their inflections. The vowel at the word final position of the inflected form indicates the gender i.e. o for masculine and i for feminine. Only finite relative clauses contain the relative pronouns. Interrogative pronouns are of two types-personal and impersonal.

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Abbreviations

1-1st Person

2-2nd Personal 3-3rd Person COP-Copula F-Feminine

INST-Instrumental M- Masculine

NF-Non-Finite NOM-Nominative OBL- Oblique

PL- plural
PROG- Progressive SG-Singular
VOC-Vocative

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বিপন্নতার নিরিখে টোটো ভাষাঃ একটি সমীক্ষা

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ABSTRACT

বিপন্ন এবং বিলুপ্ত ভাষা নিয়ে কাজ আশির দশকেই শুরু হয়ে গিয়েছিল। সারা পৃথিবী জুড়ে অনেক ভাষা রয়েছে যেগুলি দিন গুনছে একটা সময় পৃথিবী থেকে হারিয়ে যাওয়ার। আলোচ্য প্রবন্ধে উত্তরবঙ্গের আলিপুরদুয়ার জেলার ভূটান সীমান্তে অবস্থিত অত্যন্ত গুরুত্বপূর্ণ টোটোপাড়ার টোটো জনজাতির টোটো ভাষা নিয়ে আলোচনা করা হয়েছে। টোটো ভাষাটি বিপন্ন কিন্তু বিপন্নতার ঠিক কোন স্তরে বর্তমানে অবস্থান করছে এখানে আলোচ্য বিষয়। টোটোরা নিজেদের ভাষা ব্যতীত বাংলা, হিন্দি, নেপালি সহ প্রায় চার থেকে পাঁচটি ভাষা জানেন, কেউ কেউ তার অধিক ভাষাও জানেন। তবুও তাঁদের মধ্যে অধিকংশ যারা নিজেদের ভাষা নিয়ে একটু সচেতন তারা একটু সরকারি তৎপরতা চায়। এই প্রবন্ধে টোটো ভাষার সজীবতা (Vitality) ও বিপন্নতাকে (Endangerment) ইউনেস্কোর প্রশ্নাবলীর ভিত্তিতে ক্ষেত্রসমীক্ষার (Field Survey) মারফত দেখানো হয়েছে।

১। ভূমিকা

প্রবন্ধের মূল বিষয়ে বিশ্লেষণের পূর্বে টোটোদের অবস্থান নিয়ে আলোকপাত করা যাক। জলপাইগুড়ি জেলার বর্তমান আলিপুরদুয়ার জেলার মাদারিহাট থানার অন্তর্ভুক্ত ভারত ও ভূটান সীমান্তে অবস্থিত টোটোপাড়া। একমাত্র পশ্চিমবঙ্গের এই টোটোপাড়াতেই টোটোরা বসবাস করে। ভূটান সীমান্তে তাডিং পাহাড়ের দক্ষিণ ঢালে অবস্থিত এই গ্রামের উচ্চতা ৫৫০'ফুট থেকে ২০২৪' ফুট। ভৌগোলিক অবস্থান ২৬$^{\circ}$৫০' উত্তর অক্ষাংশ এবং ৮৯$^{\circ}$২০' পূর্ব দ্রাঘিমাংশে। হাওড়ি নদীর বিস্তীর্ণ নদীখাত পেরোতেই ভুটান সীমান্তের শেষ পাহাড়ের দক্ষিণ কোল, এই কোলেই টোটোপাড়া। টোটোপাড়ার উত্তরদিকে ভূটানের কমলা বাগান, দক্ষিণদিকে জলপাইগুড়ি জেলার সংরক্ষিত বন, পূর্বদিকে তোর্সা নদী এবং পশ্চিমদিকে ভুটানের তাদিং গ্রাম। সাতটি পাহাড়ি নদী বা ঝোড়ো পেরিয়ে যেতে হয় এই টোটোপাড়াতে।

উৎস (Source): [টোটো উপজাতির ইতিকথা, ২০০৭]
(চিত্র.১)

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সাহিত্য পর্যালোচনা

বর্তমানে যেখানে টোটোপাড়া পূর্বে সেখানে গারোদের বসবাস বলে মনে করা হয়। আবার এটা বলা হয়ে থাকে যে ১৯০১ সালে স্যান্ডার্স রিপোর্টে বলা হয়েছিল যে টোটোরা ভূটান থেকে উৎখাত হয়ে এসে প্রায় ছয় হাজার বিঘা জমি জুড়ে এই টোটোপাড়ায় বসতি স্থাপন করে। ['টোটো উপজাতির কথা', ২০০৭, পৃষ্ঠা ৮] আগে সেখানে শুধুমাত্র টোটোরা বসবাস করলেও এখন সেখানে মেচ, আদিবাসী, নেপালি, বিহারী, রাজবংশী বিভিন্ন জাতির বসবাস। পূর্বে যে কয়েকটি স্থানে টোটোদের বসতি ছিল বলে চারুচন্দ্র সান্যাল তাঁর "The Meches and Totos of North Bengal " গ্রন্থে উল্লেখ করেছেন তা নিম্নে উল্লেখ করা হল-

টোটোদের অবস্থান সম্পর্কে তিনি বলেন পশ্চিম ডুয়ার্স থেকে আলিপুরদুয়ারের দিকে আরও স্পষ্ট করে বললে তিস্তা নদীর চম্পাসুরি ফেরি ঘাট বরাবর যেটি বৈকুণ্ঠপুরের চুম্পদাঙ্গি জঙ্গলের দিক থেকে পরিশেষে আসাম সীমান্তের সংকোশ নদীর দিকে গিয়েছে সেখানে টোটোদের অবস্থান ছিল। টোটোরা সাধারণত নদীর তীরবর্তী অঞ্চলকেই জলের প্রাচুর্যের জন্য বেছে নিয়েছিল। সভ্যতার উত্থান বা পৃথিবীর যেকোনো বড় নগরীর উত্থান নদী তীরবর্তী অঞ্চলেই হয়েছিল, ইতিহাস সেই সাক্ষ্য দেয়।

এক। টোট্গাঁওঃ জলপাইগুড়ি জেলার ময়নাগুড়ি তহসিলের মাল থানার চেংমারি পরগণার টোট্গাঁও এর উল্লেখ করেছেন। ১৯৫৩ সালেই এটা অনুসন্ধানের মাধ্যমে জানা যায় যে সেখানে টোটোদের বসতি ছিল। হস্তনারায়ণ প্রধান যিনি নেপাল থেকে এসেছিলেন এলেনবেরি টি এস্টেটে তাঁর কাছ থেকে জানা গিয়েছিল যে টোট্গাঁও তিস্তার জলে ভেসে গিয়েছিল।

দুই। টোটাপাড়াঃ টোটাপাড়া টি এস্টেট কেই মোরাঘাট জঙ্গল ব্লকের টোটাপাড়া বলা হতো যেহেতু সেখানে এককালে টোটোদের বসতি ছিল। এখানেও ১৯৫৩ সালের অনুসন্ধানের পর জানা যায় যে রঙ্গতি নদীর তীরবর্তী কলাবাড়ি ও মোঘলকাটা টি এস্টেটের মধ্যবর্তী অঞ্চলে তাঁদের বসবাস ছিল, পরবর্তীতে মেচ জনজাতি ঐ অঞ্চল দখল করে নেয়।

তিন। তাতপাড়াঃ আলিপুরদুয়ার জেলার ভাতিবাড়ি পরগণায় অবস্থিত তাতপাড়া। আলিপুরদুয়ার সিভিল স্টেশন ও মহাকালগুঁড়ির মধ্যবর্তী রায়ডাক নদীর তীরে টোটোদের বসতি ছিল বলে অনুমান করা হয়। অনুমান করা হয় যে তাঁদের ভুটিয়াদের মতো দেখতে ছিল যারা পরবর্তীতে ভুটনে চলে যায়।

চার। টোটপাড়াঃ ১৯৫৩ এর একটি রিপোর্টে বলা হয় যে টোটো মানুষ ধুপগুড়ি-ফালাকাটার নিকট ডুডুয়া নদীর তীরবর্তী লক্ষ্মীপুর (Luxmipur) অঞ্চলে পাঁচটি টোটো পরিবার বসবাস করতো।

পাঁচ। টোটোপাড়াঃ বর্তমান যে টোটোপাড়া সেখানকেই বোঝানো হয়েছে। টোটোরা টোটোপাড়ায় যখন স্থানান্তর করছিল তখন তারা আগে ভূটানের তাদিং এ আসে। তারা বসবাসের জন্য সমভূমি থেকে ধীরে ধীরে পার্বত্য অঞ্চলকে বেছে নেয়।

পরবর্তীতে পশ্চিম ডুয়ার্স বা সংকোশ নদীর তীরবর্তী অঞ্চল কোথাও টোটোদের চিহ্ন পাওয়া যায়না। মনে করা হয় কিছু টোটো মেচদের সঙ্গে মিশে গিয়েছে, কিছু টোটো নেপাল ও উচ্চ ভূটানে চলে গিয়েছে। আর বাকি যারা তারা আজকের টোটোপাড়াতে অবস্থান করছে।

নৃতাত্ত্বিক দিক থেকে টোটো জনজাতি টিবেটো – মঙ্গোলয়েড নৃ-গোষ্ঠীর একটি শাখা। আবার ভাষাগত ভাবে টোটো ভাষা তিব্বতি বর্মি ভাষা গোষ্ঠীর একটি ধারা। গ্রিয়ারসন বলেছিলেন – "The Toto dialect will be dealt with after Rong, because it does not make any use of pronominal suffixes. Our materials are, however, so imperfect that it is impossible to say anything for certain about its affiliation. The numerals are almost the same as Dhimal". [Linguistic Survey of India, vol.III. part-1 Reprint – 1967, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi-7. PP. 181] গঠনগত দিক থেকে লিম্বু, লেপচা রাই, ধিমাল, নেওয়ারী, গারো প্রভৃতি ভাষার সঙ্গে টোটো ভাষার সংস্রব রয়েছে। বর্তমানে, টোটো ভাষার মধ্যে নেপালি শব্দের প্রবেশ ঘটেছে। গ্রিয়ারসন এই ভাষার যে

শিকড় সেটা নিয়ে বলতে গিয়ে অন্যান্য ভাষার যে প্রভাব সেটা বলেছেন এবং অদূর ভবিষ্যতে ভাষা নিয়ে অবলুপ্তির একটি শঙ্কা তাঁর বক্তব্যের মধ্যে রয়েছে।

নৃতাত্ত্বিক বিমলেন্দু মজুমদারের ১৯৯৬ সালের লেখা থেকে আমরা জানতে পারিঃ

১৯৬৯ সালের আগে পর্যন্ত টোটোপাড়ায় ১৯৯১.৫৯ একর জমি টোটো দলপতি ধনপতি টোটোর নামে টোটোদের যৌথ সম্পত্তি হিসেবে নথিভুক্ত ছিল। ১৯৬৯ সালে কোনও কারণ না দেখিয়ে ৩৪৭.৪৩ একর বাদে জমিদারি অধিগ্রহণ আইন (৩৮)-৪৪(২ক) ধারামতে টোটোদের সব জমি জেলাশাসকের খাস জমি হিসেবে নথিভুক্ত করে। অন্যদিকে ৩৪৭.৪৩ একর জমি(যা সেবছর টোটোদের চাষের এলাকা ছিল) ৮৯টি টোটো পরিবারের ব্যক্তিগত জমি হিসেবে নথিভুক্ত করে। এর ফলে বর্তমানে (১৯৯১-এ) ৯১টি পরিবারের নথিভুক্ত কোনও জমি নেই। নিজেদের জমিতেই তাঁরা ভূমিহীন। আবার যেসব পরিবারের জমি আছে, তাঁদের মধ্যে ৬০টি পরিবারের জমির পরিমাণ ৪ একরেরও কম। অথচ কৃষি বিশেষজ্ঞদের মতে টোটোপাড়ার মতো জায়গায় ৫ একরের কম জমি অর্থনৈতিক দিক থেকে চাষের পক্ষে লাভজনক নয়। অন্যদিকে বহিরাগতরা টোটোপাড়ার সবচেয়ে ভালো জমিগুলি দখল করে নিয়েছে এবং তাঁদের জমির পরিমাণ ৫-১৫ একরের বেশি। এভাবে আর্থিক অবস্থার অবনতির ফলে টোটোরা সারাক্ষণ জীবিকার তাড়নায় ব্যস্ত থাকেন...।(সূত্র ৮,পৃ. ১৬১)।

অনিল কুমার সরকারের “Tribes of Sub-Himalayan Region” গ্রন্থে টোটোদের সম্পর্কে বলেছেন- “The Totos are unable to say whence they came, but allege that they have been at Totopara for many generations. They are different from the Bhutias in many respects and have a language of their own.”(page.21)

পশ্চিমবঙ্গে যে তিনটি আদিম আদিবাসী (Primitive) বাস করেন তাঁদের মধ্যে সবচেয়ে ক্ষুদ্রতম জনগোষ্ঠী এই টোটো সম্প্রদায়। অন্য দুটি হল- বিরহড় ও লোধা। টোটোদের প্রকৃত নাম ‘তত্‌পা’ বা ‘টট্‌পা' ।এটি একটি তিব্বতি মূল ‘শেরপা’ শব্দ। তিব্বতি ভাষায় ‘স্টোড বোড’ কথাটির অর্থ উচ্চ-তিব্বত। শেরপা ভাষায় এই শব্দটির উচ্চারণ ‘টোডপড’ বা ‘ততপড’> তত্‌পা অর্থাৎ উচ্চ তিব্বতের অধিবাসী।

১৯৫৫ সালে নৃতাত্ত্বিক চারুচন্দ্র সান্যাল লিখেছিলেনঃ

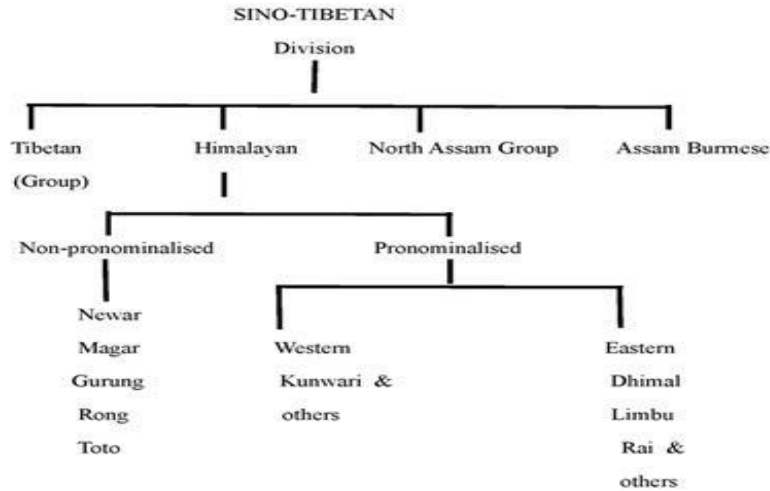
পূর্ববর্তী বসতির ইতিহাস নির্দেশ করে যে তিন থেকে চার প্রজন্ম আগে ভালো সংখ্যক টোটো পশ্চিম ডুয়ার্স্‌-এ বসবাস করত। তিস্তার পশ্চিমে বা সঙ্কোশের – এর পূর্বে টোটোদের বসতিস্থাপনের কোনও চিহ্ন নেই। তাই ধরা যেতে পারে যে তারা পশ্চিম ডুয়ার্সেই থাকতো। গোটা পশ্চিম ডুয়ার্স্‌ তখন ভুটানের অধীন ছিল। ভুটিয়াদের হাতে পীড়ন, অন্য সংস্কৃতির প্রভাব এবং তার সঙ্গে পশ্চিম ডুয়ার্সের কুখ্যাত ম্যালেরিয়ার কোপ- এই সমস্ত কারণে টোটোদের সংখ্যা কমে যেতে থাকে। কমতে কমতে শেষাবধি ডুয়ার্সের সমতল অঞ্চলের পুরানো বসতিগুলোয় টোটোদের আর চিহ্ন রইলো না। প্রাণরক্ষা করতে পারা অল্প সংখ্যক টোটো এক জায়গা থেকে আরেক জায়গায় ঘুরতে ঘুরতে ভবঘুরে গোষ্ঠী হিসেবে আশ্রয় খুঁজতে থাকল। এমন প্রমাণ আছে যে তাঁদের মধ্যে একটা অংশ মেচ পরিবারের অন্তর্ভুক্ত হয়ে গেল, একটা অংশ নেপাল ও উত্তর ভুটনে গিয়ে সম্ভবত সেখানকার মানুষজনের সঙ্গে মিলেমিশে গেল। আর অল্প কয়েকজন আশ্রয় নিল গভীর জঙ্গলে ঘেরা এক পাহাড়ের স্বাস্থ্যকর অংশে এবং সেই এলাকার চৌহদ্দির মধ্যে তারা নিজেদের সীমাবদ্ধ রাখল। এই স্থানটি হল টোটোপাড়া। যেখানে ধীরে ধীরে তার সংখ্যায় বাড়ছে।

আবার ডক্টর অনিল কুমার বিশ্বাস লিখেছেন –

১৯৫০ এর সংবিধানের নির্দেশনামায় তফসিলি উপজাতি হিসেবে টোটো জনজাতির নাম অন্তর্ভুক্ত ছিল না। পরবর্তীতে সংবিধানের তফসিলি উপজাতি সংক্রান্ত সংশোধনীতে ১৯৫৬ এর ২৯ শে অক্টোবর টোটোদের নাম অন্তর্ভুক্ত হয়। এর আগে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ থেকে শুধুমাত্র ভুটিয়া, লেপচা, মেচ, মুন্ডা, ওঁরাও ও সাঁওতালদের নাম ছিল। অন্তর্ভুক্তির পর টোটোরা সরকারের সুবিধা পেতে থাকে। যদিও পশ্চিমবঙ্গে টোটোরা একটি

বিচ্ছিন্ন জনজাতি হিসেবেই পরিচিত। পরবর্তীতে শুধুমাত্র সরকার নয় বিভিন্ন NGO এর ও সাহায্য টোটোরা পেতে থাকে। (অনিল কুমার বিশ্বাস, ২০১৯, পৃষ্ঠা.৩)।

বিপন্নতার মান নির্ণয়

টোটো ভাষাটির কোন বিকল্প নাম নেই। এটি একটি সজীব ভাষা (Living Language)। ভাষাটির ISO Code (s) হল – Toto (ISO 639-3 code: txo)। ISO হল (International Organization for Standardization)। যদি স্পষ্ট করে বলা যায়, ISO হল ভাষার কোড অনুযায়ী ভাষাকে চিহ্নিত করার মান। এখানে আরেকটি বিষয় উল্লেখনীয় ISO 693-3 হল একটি কোড যা তিনটি অক্ষর (যেমন এখানে txo) দ্বারা চিহ্নিত মানবিক সব ভাষাকে শনাক্ত করে। ISO 693-1 ও ISO 693-2 প্রধানত পৃথিবীর প্রধান ভাষাগুলিকে চিহ্নিত করে। টোটো ভাষাকে তিব্বত ভাষা গোষ্ঠীর হিমালয়ান শাখার তিব্বত - বর্মি পরিবারের ভাষা বলেছেন গ্রীয়ারসন (1901) তাঁর Linguistic Survey of India এর vol-III এর Part–I এ। আবার এই ভাষাকে অ – সর্বনামঘটিত (Non-pronominalised) তিব্বতি – হিমালয়ান উপভাষা (Dialect) রূপেও বর্ণনা করেছেন ডক্তর.আই.জে.এস তারাপরেওয়ালা (1978)। নিম্নে তারই করা শ্রেণিবিন্যাসকে দেখানো হলঃ

উৎস (Source): [Cultural and Economic Transformation of a small tribe in the Sub-Himalayan: A study of the totos, 1993]

(চিত্র.২)

এবার আসা যাক টোটোপাড়ায় যে গ্রামগুলোতে টোটোরা বসবাস করে সেই গ্রামগুলো হল-

এক। পঞ্চায়েত গাঁও

দুই। সুব্বা গাঁও বা কাইজি গাঁও।

তিন। মণ্ডল গাঁও বা গাপ্পু গাঁও।

চার। মিত্রং গাঁও।

পাঁচ। দুমসি গাঁও বা বৌদুবে গাঁও।

ছয়। পুজা গাঁও বা বুদুবে গাঁও। এবং

সাত। পাখা গাঁও।

এছাড়াও টোটোপাড়ায় মঙ্গল গাঁও, পোয়ার গাঁও, কাবরাবতির মতো গ্রাম আছে যেখানে নেপালিরা বসবাস করে। বিপন্নতার স্তরটি দেখার আগে ‘টোটোজাতির কথা’ গ্রন্থের (নায়ক বিপ্লব, টোটো সত্যজিৎ,

টোটো ধনীরাম, ২০১৮) একটি সারণির মাধ্যমে টোটোদের সংখ্যা ও তাঁদের বিভিন্ন সময়ে সেই সংখ্যার হ্রাস বৃদ্ধির দিকটা দেখা যাক।

বছর	পরিবারের সংখ্যা	জনসংখ্যা			১০ বছরে পরিবর্তন (+বৃদ্ধি,, --হ্রাস)
		পুরুষ	মহিলা	মোট	
১৯০১	৩৬	৭২	৯১	১৭১	
১৯১১	৬০	১৩৫	১২০	২৫৫	+৮৪
১৯২১	৬০	১৪০	১৩১	২৭১	+১৬
১৯৩১	৬৩	১৩০	২০৪	৩৩৪	+৬৩
১৯৪১		১৫৯	১৬২	৩২১	- ১৩
১৯৫১	৬৯	১৬১	১৬০	৩২১	- ০
১৯৬১	৮৫	২০৬	১৮৯	৩৯৫	+৭৪
১৯৭১	৯৬	৩৩২	৩১৮	৬৫০	+২৫৫
১৯৮১	১৩৫	৩৫৭	৩৪৯	৭০৬	+৫৬
১৯৯১	১৪১	৪৭১	৪৫৭	৯২৬	+২২০
২০০১	২৩৮	৬১০	৫৬৫	১১৭৫	+২৪৯
২০১১	৩০৬	৭৩৯	৬৫০	১৩৮৯	+২১৪

(সারণি. ১)

উপরের সারণি থেকে দেখা যাচ্ছে যে ১৯০১ থেকে ১৯৩১ পর্যন্ত পর্যন্ত টোটোদের সংখ্যার বৃদ্ধি হলেও এরপর প্রায় দু' দশক জনসংখ্যার তেমন হ্রাস বৃদ্ধি ঘটেনি আবার তারপর একটি স্থিতাবস্থা বজায় ছিল। তারপর ১৯৮১ থেকে আবার জনসংখ্যার বৃদ্ধি ঘটতে থাকে। এখানে উল্লেখ্য যে ১৯৩১ এর পর ডুয়ার্সে দেখা গিয়েছিল ভয়াল দুর্ভিক্ষ আর দ্বিতীয় বিশ্বযুদ্ধের পরোক্ষ প্রভাব। বর্তমানে টোটোদের সংখ্যা প্রায় ১৬৫২ জন। ধনীরাম টোটো, ভারত টোটোর কথা অনুযায়ী টোটোপাড়ায় বর্তমানে নেপালি অধিবাসিদের একটা আধিপত্য দেখা যাচ্ছে। দ্বাদশ শ্রেণীতে পাঠরত মঙ্গলি টোটো বলে যে, স্থানীয় বিদ্যালয়গুলিতে শিক্ষক - শিক্ষিকারা ছাত্র- ছাত্রীদের সঙ্গে কথোপকথনের সময় অনেক সময় নেপালি ভাষা ব্যবহার করে থাকেন। নেপালি অধিবাসীদের এই যে আধিক্য টোটো ভাষায় ব্যাপকভাবে প্রভাব ফেলেছে। এমনিতেই প্রভাবশালী ভাষা বাংলা, হিন্দির কবলে পড়ে মাতৃভাষার উপর প্রভাব পড়েছে উপরন্তু অনেক নবীন প্রজন্মের টোটো ছেলেমেয়েরা টোটো বলতে গিয়ে নেপালী শব্দ ব্যবহার করে সচেতন ভাবে আর নিজেদের ভাষায় অনেক শব্দের অর্থ জানলোই না (ধনীরাম টোটোর কথা অনুযায়ী)। একটি দুটি করে এভাবে একটা সময় তো নবীন প্রজন্ম নিজের ভাষাটির গুরুত্বই হারিয়ে ফেলবে। এর থেকে সহজেই একটা ধারণা বা আশঙ্কা করা যায় যে আগামীতে নেপালি ভাষা টোটোদের কাছে বিশেষ ভাবে আরও গুরুত্ব পাবে এবং টোটো ভাষার জায়গা অনেকটাই দখল করে নেবে।

এবার ইউনেস্কোর প্রশ্নাবলীর বিভিন্ন প্রশ্নের ভিত্তিতে প্রাপ্ত উত্তর ও তাঁর গড় মানকে নিম্নে এক্সেলে প্রস্তুত গ্রাফের মাধ্যমে প্রথমে দেখানো হল। ইউনেস্কোর প্রশ্নাবলীতে মোট চব্বিশটি প্রশ্ন আছে। ভাষার বিপন্নতা নির্ণয়ে এখানে প্রথম প্রশ্নটি যেটি আবার ভাষার বিপন্নতা নির্ণয়ের সূচকও (Reliability Index)

সেইটি ব্যতীত বাকি তেইশটি প্রশ্নের উপর এই সমীক্ষা পর্বটি নির্ভরশীল। তেইশটি প্রশ্নের সমীক্ষার ভিত্তিতে প্রাপ্ত উত্তরের সাপেক্ষে প্রথম প্রশ্নটির মান নির্ণয় করা হয়েছে। সেই প্রশ্নটি নিম্নে উল্লেখ করা হলঃ

১। সামগ্রিক জীবনীশক্তি / বিপন্নতার স্কোরঃ	৫ ভাষাটি নিরাপদ	নির্ভরযোগ্য সূচক:	মন্তব্য
	৪ অসুরক্ষিত	১	
	৩ স্পষ্টভাবে বিপন্ন	২	
	২ গুরুতরভাবে বিপন্ন	৩	
	১সমালোচনার দৃষ্টিতে বিপন্ন		
	০ লুপ্ত		

(সারণি.২)

ইউনেস্কোর প্রশ্নাবলীতে বিপন্নতার নিরীক্ষণ করা হয় দুটি প্রক্রিয়ায়। (১) তথ্যপ্রদানকারীদের দ্বারা প্রদত্ত স্কোর, এবং (২) সমীক্ষাকারীর দ্বারা প্রদত্ত স্কোর। এই দুই স্কোরের গড় হিসেব করে ভাষাটির বিপন্নতা নির্ধারণ করা হয়েছে। ২০২১ এর মার্চ এবং ২০২৩ এর জানুয়ারী মাসে টোটোপাড়ায় গিয়ে সেখানকার জনজাতির সাথে কথোপকথনের ভিত্তিতে পাওয়া তথ্যের ভিত্তিতে ভাষার বিপন্নতাকে দেখানো হয়েছে।
প্রথমে তথ্যপ্রদানকারীর গড় মানকে (যেটি এই প্রশ্নাবলীর গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বিভাগ) একটি নির্ভরযোগ্য অঙ্কে রূপায়িত করতে ইউনেস্কো প্রশ্নাবলীর বিশেষ কয়েকটি প্রশ্নকে (চার নং প্রশ্ন, পাঁচ নং, ছয় নং, সাত নং, আট নং, নয় নং, দশ নং, এগারো নং, বারো নং, আঠার নং, ঊনিশ নং, বাইশ নং, তেইশ নং এবং শেষ চব্বিশ নং প্রশ্ন) নির্বাচন করে তাঁর গড় মানের হিসেবকে এখানে দেখানো হয়েছে। প্রথমেই আসা যাক চার নম্বর প্রশ্নের (উল্লিখিত সম্প্রদায়ের মধ্যে কথকের অনুপাত) ক্ষেত্রে যার বিবরণ নিম্নে গ্রাফের মাধ্যমে দেখানো হয়েছে।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৪

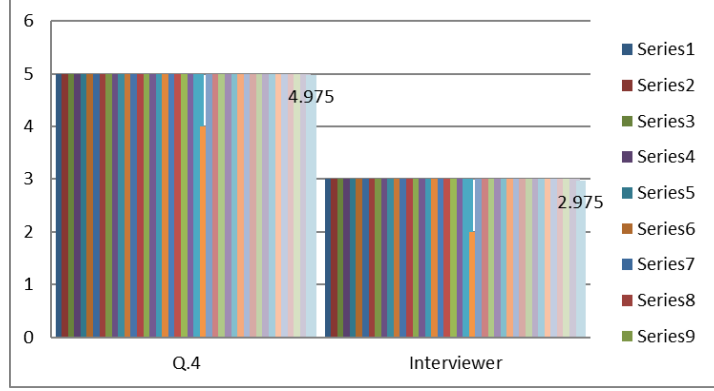
উল্লিখিত সম্প্রদায়ের (টোটো জনজাতি) সাপেক্ষে কথকের অনুপাত প্রশ্নটির মোট ছয়টি বিকল্প (Option) রয়েছে। সেগুলি সম্পর্কে নিম্নে বর্ণনা করা হল।

এক। যদি জনজাতির প্রায় সবাই অর্থাৎ ৯০% এর অধিক মানুষ নির্দিষ্ট ভাষায় কথা বলেন তবে স্কোর ৫।

দুই। একটা বড় অংশ ৭০%-৯০% যদি কথা বলে থাকেন তবে স্কোর ৪।

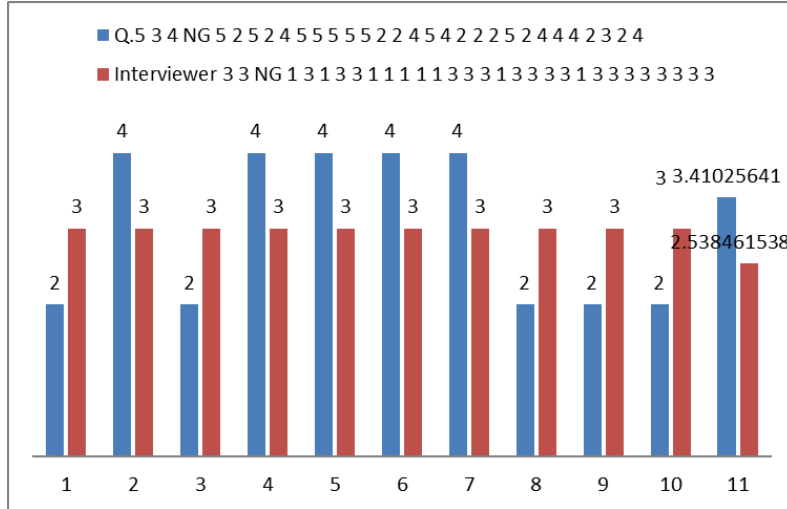
তিন। একটা বৃহৎ অংশ ৫০%-৭০% যদি কথা বলেন তবে স্কোর ৩।

চার। সংখ্যায় কম অর্থাৎ ৩০%-৫০% যদি ঐ ভাষায় কথা বলেন তবে স্কোর ২।

পাঁচ। খুবই কম সংখ্যক মানুষ ৩০% এর কম যদি ঐ ভাষায় কথা বলেন তবে স্কোর ছয়। কেউই যদি ঐ ভাষায় কথা না বলেন তবে সেক্ষেত্রে স্কোর ০।

উল্লিখিত সম্প্রদায়ের মধ্যে কথকের অনুপাত
(Proportion of speakers within the reference community)

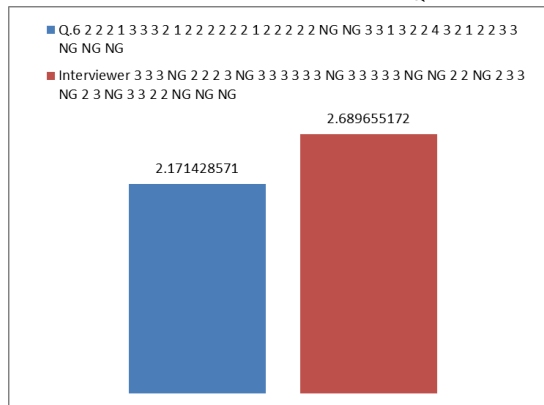
এখানে দেখা গিয়েছে যে অধিকাংশ টোটো মানুষই বিভোজিত টোটো ব্যতীত (দ্বিতীয় বিকল্প) প্রথম বিকল্পটিতেই উত্তর দিয়েছেন। চল্লিশজন টোটো মানুষ যে উত্তর দিয়েছেন তার গড় মান হল- ৪.৯৭৫। আর এই একই প্রশ্নের ক্ষেত্রে টোটো মানুষ দ্বারা বিবৃত উত্তরের সাপেক্ষে সমীক্ষক দ্বারা প্রাপ্ত সর্বোচ্চ স্কোর ৩ দেওয়া হয়েছে মোট উনচল্লিশজনকে, আর স্কোর ২ প্রদান করা হয়েছে একজনকে। এইভাবে তথ্যসংগ্রহকারীর দ্বারা প্রদত্ত স্কোরের গড় মান হয়েছে - ২.৯৭৫।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৫

পাঁচ নম্বর প্রশ্নের ক্ষেত্রেও ছয়টি বিকল্প (Option) রয়েছে। প্রথমে আছে ভাষাটির সর্বত্র ব্যবহার। ভাষাটি সব ক্ষেত্রে এবং সব কাজে ব্যবহৃত হয়। এই বিকল্পের জন্য সর্বোচ্চ স্কোরটি ৫। দ্বিতীয় বিকল্পটি বহুভাষী সমতা (Multilingual parity) অর্থাৎ দুই বা তাঁর অধিক ভাষা ব্যবহৃত হতে পারে বেশিরভাগ সামাজিক পরিসর ও কার্যক্ষেত্রে; ভাষাটি সরকারি কার্যক্ষেত্রে ব্যবহার হয়না বললেই চলে (উদাহরণস্বরূপ, সরকারি বা প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক ক্ষেত্র, ব্যবসায়িক ক্ষেত্র, প্রশাসনিক ক্ষেত্র, শিক্ষাক্ষেত্র ইত্যাদি) কিন্তু সম্প্রদায়ের জনগণের যে পরিসর সেখানে ব্যবহৃত হয় (যেমন, ধর্মীয় অনুষ্ঠান, সম্প্রদায়ের একত্রিতকরণ ইত্যাদিতে) এবং লৌকিকতাবর্জিত স্থানে বা ঘরোয়া ভাবে (Informal domains)। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৪। তৃতীয় বিকল্পটি ক্ষয়িষ্ণু বা ক্ষয়প্রাপ্ত এলাকা (Dwindling domain) অর্থাৎ প্রভাবশালী ভাষাটির প্রবেশ লোকালয়ে ঘটে (Begins to penetrate informal domains), এমনকি ঘরেও। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৩। চতুর্থ বিকল্পটিতে কেউ উত্তর দিলে তার স্কোর ২। এখানে বলা হয়েছে সীমাবদ্ধ এলাকার কথা (Limited domains)। ভাষাটি সীমিত সামাজিক পরিসরে ব্যবহৃত হয় কিছু সামাজিক কাজে। পঞ্চম বিকল্পটিতে যিনি বা যারা উত্তর দিয়েছেন তাঁদের স্কোর ১। এখানে বলা হয়েছে অত্যন্ত সীমিত পরিসর (Highly limited domains) অর্থাৎ ভাষাটি খুবই সীমিত পরিসর বা অঞ্চলে খুব সীমিত কিছু কাজের জন্য ব্যবহৃত হয়। পাঁচ নম্বর বিকল্পটিতে বলা হয়েছে ভাষাটি আর বলা হয়না (No longer spoken) বা ভাষাটি কোন পরিসরেই আদৌ আর বলা হয়না। এই বিকল্পটির স্কোর শূন্য। যদিও দেখা গিয়েছে যে এই বিকল্পটিতে কেউই উত্তর দেয়নি।

ভাষা ব্যবহারের ক্ষেত্র
(Domains of language use)

স্কোর ৫ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন মোট নয়জন। স্কোর ৪ এ মোট তেরোজন, স্কোর ৩ এ দুইজন আর স্কোর ২ এ সব থেকে বেশি পনেরজন টোটো ব্যক্তি উত্তর দিয়েছেন। আর সানি টোটো এই প্রশ্নের জন্য কোন বিকল্পেই উত্তর দেয়নি। পরিশেষে উল্লিখিত প্রশ্নের উত্তরে তথ্যদাতাদের থেকে প্রাপ্ত গড় মান হল- ৩.৪১০৩।
আর তথ্যসংগ্রহকারী দ্বারা সর্বোচ্চ স্কোর ৩ প্রদান করা হয়েছে ত্রিশ জনকে, স্কোর ১ প্রদান করা হয়েছে নয়জনকে আর কোন নম্বরই প্রদান করা হয়নি একজনকে। স্কোরের ভিত্তিতে গড় মান হয়েছে - ২.৫৩৮।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৬

ছয় নম্বর প্রশ্নের মোট পাঁচটি বিকল্প (Option)। প্রথমে ভাষাটি নতুন অঞ্চলে বারবার ব্যবহৃত হয়। এই বিকল্পের সাপেক্ষে যারা উত্তর দিয়েছেন সেক্ষেত্রে স্কোর ৪ প্রদান করা হয়েছে। উল্লেখ্য এই প্রশ্নে সর্বোচ্চ স্কোর ৪। দুই নম্বরে ভাষাটি কখনো কখনো নতুন এলাকায় ব্যবহৃত হয়। এক্ষেত্রে স্কোর ৩। ভাষাটি নতুন এলাকায় বিরলভাবে (Rarely) ব্যবহৃত হয়। এর সাপেক্ষে স্কোর ২। ভাষাটি কখনোই নতুন এলাকায় ব্যবহৃত হয়না। এক্ষেত্রে যিনি উত্তর দিয়েছেন তার স্কোর ১। আর শেষ বিকল্পটি প্রযোজ্য নয় (Not applicable)। এর সাপেক্ষে যিনি উত্তর দিয়েছেন তার স্কোর ০ (শূন্য)।

সম্প্রচার মাধ্যম এবং ইন্টারনেট সহ নতুন অঞ্চল ও নতুন গণমাধ্যম
(New domain, i.e. new media, including broadcast media and the Internet)

এখানে সমীক্ষা করে দেখা গিয়েছে যে ৪ স্কোরে উত্তর দিয়েছেন একজন। স্কোর ৩ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন নয়জন আর স্কোর ২ এ মোট কুড়ি জন। স্কোর ১ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন পাঁচজন এবং পাঁচজন কোন উত্তরই প্রদান করেননি। তথ্যপ্রদানকারী যে স্কোর দিয়েছেন তার গড় হল ৫ এর মধ্যে ২.১৭১ (২.১৭১/৫)।
অন্যদিকে ছয় নম্বরে কুড়িজনকে ৩, নয় জনকে ২ স্কোর দেওয়া হয়েছে। আর এগারো জন কোন স্কোর পায়নি। গড় হয়েছে – ২.৬৯। তথ্যসংগ্রহকারী যে স্কোর দিয়েছেন তার গড় মান ৩ এর মধ্যে (২.৬৯/৩)।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৭

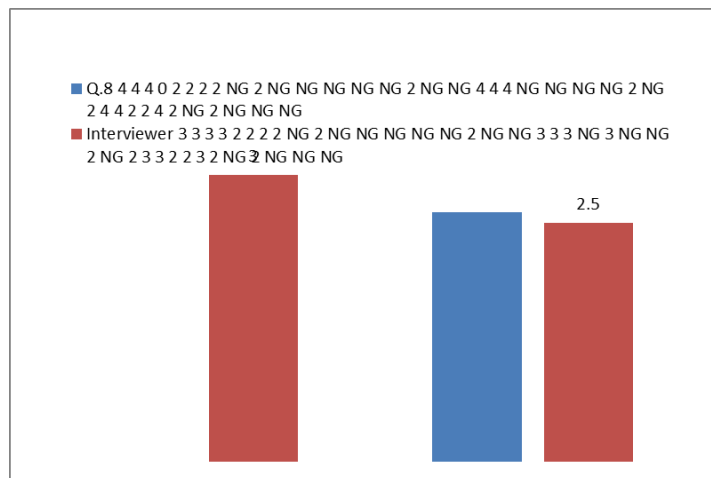
সাত নম্বর প্রশ্নের ছয়টি বিকল্প (Option)। প্রথাগত জ্ঞানের পরিসরকে বাহিত করে দেওয়ার জন্য এই ভাষাটি ব্যবহৃত হয় - এক। বারবার। এই বিকল্পের স্কোর ৫। দুই। নাকি কখনো কখনো। এখানে যিনি উত্তর দিয়েছেন তার স্কোর ৪। তিন। কদাচিৎ। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৩। চার। নাকি কখনোই ব্যবহৃত হয়না। এই যিনি উত্তর দিয়েছেন তার স্কোর ২। পাঁচ। প্রথাগত জ্ঞানকে অন্যের কাছে পৌঁছে দেওয়ার জন্য অন্য ভাষার ব্যবহার করা হয় কিনা। এক্ষেত্রে স্কোর ১। আর ছয়। প্রথাগত জ্ঞান কদাচিৎ অন্যের কাছে পৌঁছোয়। এই বিকল্পে স্কোর ০ (শূন্য)।

প্রথাগত জ্ঞানের পরিসর
(Domain of traditional knowledge)

সাত নম্বর প্রশ্নের উত্তরে দেখা গিয়েছে যে প্রথাগত জ্ঞান ব্যবহার করতে টোটো জনজাতির বেশির ভাগ মানুষ তাঁদের নিজেদের ভাষাই ব্যবহার করে থাকেন। এখানে প্রথম বিকল্পটিতেই বেশিরভাগ টোটো জনগণ উত্তর দিয়েছেন। অর্থাৎ স্কোর ৫ এ মোট ছাব্বিশ জন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। স্কোর ৪ এ পাঁচজন আর স্কোর ৩ এ দুইজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। সাতজন কোন উত্তর প্রদান করেননি। তথ্যদাতাদের থেকে প্রাপ্ত স্কোরের গড় মান হয়েছে ৪.৭২৭।
আর সমীক্ষক দ্বারা প্রদত্ত স্কোর গুলি যথাক্রমে – ৩ (মোট ছাব্বিশজনকে দেওয়া হয়েছে), ২ (পাঁচ জনকে), ১ (দুই জনকে) এবং NG (সাত জনকে)। তথ্য সংগ্রহকারীর স্কোরের গড় মান হয়েছে – ২.৭২৭।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৮

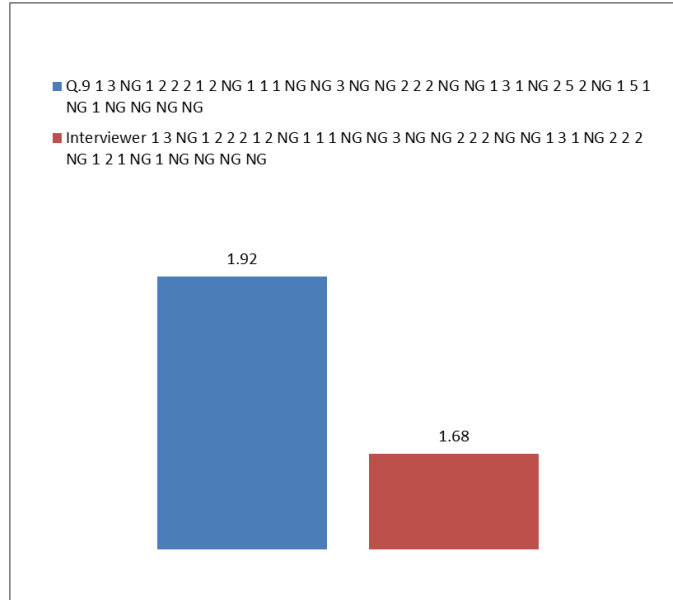
আট নম্বর প্রশ্নের ক্ষেত্রে দেখা গিয়েছে যে তথ্যদাতা দ্বারা প্রাপ্ত স্কোরের গড় মান - ২.৬০৮৭ (৫ এর মধ্যে) এখানে প্রশ্নের বিকল্পগুলি ছিল – এক। সেখানে কল্পনাপ্রসূত (Fiction) এবং বাস্তবধর্মী সাহিত্যি (Non-fiction) রচনার ধারাবাহিকতা সহ একটি প্রতিষ্ঠিত বানানবিধি (Orthography) এবং দৈনন্দিন গণমাধ্যম (Media) রয়েছে। ভাষাটি প্রশাসনিক ও শিক্ষার ক্ষেত্রে ব্যবহৃত হয় (৫)। দুই। লিখিত প্রকরণের উদাহরণ আছে এবং বিদ্যালয়ে শিশুরা ভাষাটির মাধ্যমে গড়ে উঠছে। ভাষাটির প্রশাসনিক ক্ষেত্রে লিখিত রূপে ব্যবহার হয় না (৪)। তিন। ভাষাটির লিখিত প্রকরণ মজুদ এবং বিদ্যালয়ে শিশুরা লিখিত বইয়ের

মাধ্যমে পরিচিত হয়। এর লিখিত মাধ্যমে স্বাক্ষরতার বিকাশে উৎসাহিত করা হয় না (৩)। চার। লিখিত উপাদান থাকলেও তা শুধুমাত্র কিছু সম্প্রদায়ের জন্য, বাকিদের কাছে তা কেবলমাত্র প্রতীকী তাৎপর্য ছাড়া আর কিছুই নয়। বিদ্যালয় পাঠক্রমে ভাষাটি স্বাক্ষরতার অঙ্গ নয় (২)। পাঁচ। বানানবিধির দৈনন্দিন রূপটি পরিচিত সবার কাছে এবং তাতে কিছু কিছু লেখার প্রচেষ্টা চলছে (১)। ছয়। ঐ গোষ্ঠীর কাছে কোনরূপ বানানবিধিই মজুদ নেই (০)। এখানে প্রতিটি বিকল্পের পাশে বন্ধনীর (Bracket) মধ্যে স্কোরের মান গুলি উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে।

ভাষা শিক্ষা ও স্বাক্ষরতার উপাদান
(Materials for language education and literacy)

এখানে প্রথম বিকল্পে কেউ উত্তর দেননি। দ্বিতীয় বিকল্পে ৪ স্কোর এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন নয়জন। চতুর্থ বিকল্পে ২ স্কোর এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন বারোজন আর ছয় নম্বর বিকল্পে অর্থাৎ ০ স্কোরে দুইজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। এখানে সতেরজন কোন উত্তরই প্রদান করেননি। এখানে উল্লেখ্য ভাষা শিক্ষা ও স্বাক্ষরতার উপাদান নিয়ে প্রশ্ন করায় অধিকাংশ টোটো জনজাতির মানুষের মধ্যে একটা স্বচ্ছ ধারণা নেই। তারা উত্তর দেওয়ার সময় বেশ ভাবনা চিন্তা করে উত্তর দিয়েছেন। এখানে আরও একটি বিষয় উল্লেখ্য যে ইউনেস্কোর প্রশ্নাবলীর এই আট নম্বর প্রশ্নের যে বিকল্প গুলি রয়েছে সেগুলির সাথে উত্তর প্রদানকারীর উত্তর ঠিকভাবে মেলেনি।
আর তথ্য সংগ্রহকারী দ্বারা প্রদত্ত স্কোর গুলি হল- ৩, ২, ১। এর মধ্যে ষোলজনকে কোন নম্বর প্রদান করা হয়নি।। স্কোর ৩ এবং স্কোর ২ প্রদান করা হয়েছে বারোজন করে। স্কোর ১ কাউকে প্রদান করা হয়নি। আর ষোলজন কোনো স্কোর পাননি। প্রাপ্ত স্কোরের গড় মান হয়েছে – ২.৫ (৩ এর মধ্যে)।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৯

কার্যালয় ক্ষেত্রে ভাষাটির অবস্থান ও ব্যবহার সহ সরকারি ও প্রতিষ্ঠানগতভাবে ভাষার প্রতি কেমন দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি (Attitude) এবং নীতি গ্রহণ করা হয়েছে – এই প্রশ্নের বিভিন্ন বিকল্পটি নিয়ে বলা যাক। এক। প্রথমে আছে নির্দিষ্ট ভাষা সহ সমস্ত ভাষার প্রতি সমান সমর্থন রয়েছে কিনা। অভীষ্ট বা অভিপ্রেত ভাষা সহ (Target Language) সকল ভাষার জন্য সমান সমর্থন কতটা। এই বিকল্পের স্কোর ৫। উত্তর দিয়েছেন দুইজন। দুই। পরের বিকল্পে বলা হয়েছে পৃথক সমর্থন অর্থাৎ ভাষার প্রতি পৃথকীকরণ বা ভিন্ন সমর্থনের কথা। প্রাথমিকভাবে অ – প্রধান ভাষাগুলি (Non-dominant languages) ব্যক্তিগত পরিসরের (Domain) ভাষা হিসেবে সুরক্ষিত। এবং অভীষ্ট ভাষার (Target language) ব্যবহার মর্যাদাপূর্ণ বলে তথ্যদাতারা কি সত্যিই মনে করেন কিনা। এই বিকল্পের স্কোর ৪। এক্ষেত্রে কেউ স্কোর প্রদান করেননি। তিন। তৃতীয় বিকল্প নিশ্চেষ্ট/ অপ্রতিরোধী আয়ত্তকরণ (Passive assimilation) অর্থাৎ প্রভাবশালী ভাষাটি সর্বজনীন পরিসরের (Public domain) মধ্যে বিরাজ করে কিনা এবং এর সঙ্গে এটাও বলা হয়েছে অভিপ্রেত ভাষা সহ অ –

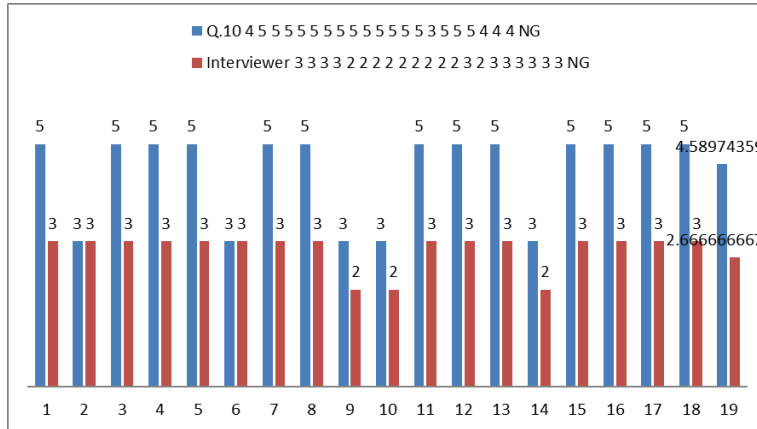
কর্তৃত্বকারী ভাষা (non-dominant languages) সংক্রান্ত কোন সুনির্দিষ্ট নীতি বিদ্যমান নেই। এই বিকল্পের স্কোর ৩ আর এখানে তিনজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। চার। এরপর সক্রিয় আয়ত্তকরণ (active assimilation) এর কথা বলা হয়েছে। সরকার জনজাতিকে প্রভাবশালী ভাষায় অপসারিত (shift) করতে উৎসাহ প্রদান করেন। অভীষ্ট (target) ভাষা সহ অ-প্রধান ভাষাগুলির জন্য কোন সংরক্ষণ নেই। এই বিকল্পের স্কোর হল ২ আর এখানে উত্তর প্রদান করেছেন নয়জন। এখানে একটি বিষয় বলা প্রয়োজন যে সরকার আলাদা করে কোন নীতি বানিয়ে মাতৃভাষা ত্যাগ করে প্রভাবশালী ভাষাতে উৎসাহ প্রদান করেন না। তবে আলাদা করে তো তাঁদের ভাষার উন্নয়নেও সাহায্য করেন না। পাঁচ। এরপরের বিকল্পে বাধ্যতামূলক/জোরপূর্বক আয়ত্তকরণ(assimilation) সম্পর্কে বলা হয়েছে যে অভীষ্ট ভাষাসহ অ - কর্তৃত্বকারী ভাষার ব্যবহারে সরকার নিরুৎসাহিত করে এবং অভীষ্ট (target) ভাষাটি সরকার কর্তৃক স্বীকৃতিপ্রাপ্তও নয়, সুরক্ষিতও নয়। স্কোর এখানে ১ এবং এগারো জন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। ছয়। আর ছয় নম্বর বিকল্পে বলা হয়েছে নিষেধাজ্ঞা (Prohibition) অ-প্রধান ভাষাসহ অভীষ্ট ভাষাটি ঐ এলাকায় নিষিদ্ধ কিনা। কিন্তু এটা তো বাস্তব নয়। এই ক্ষেত্রে কেউই উত্তর প্রদান করেননি; যদিও এর স্কোর শূন্য। আর সার্বিকভাবে এই প্রশ্নের উত্তর দেননি (NG) পনের জন।

প্রশাসনিক মান্যতা ও তার ব্যবস্থার সহ ভাষা সংক্রান্ত সরকারি ও প্রতিষ্ঠান গত দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি এবং নীতি (Governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies, including official status and use)

নয় নম্বর প্রশ্নের তথ্যদাতাদের থেকে প্রাপ্ত স্কোরের গড় মান হল- ১.৯২।

এবার আসা যাক সমীক্ষক দ্বারা প্রাপ্ত স্কোরে। একই প্রশ্নে সমীক্ষক অর্থাৎ তথ্যসংগ্রহকারী দ্বারা সর্বোচ্চ নম্বর বা স্কোর ৩ প্রদান করা হয়েছে তিনজনকে, ২ নম্বর প্রদত্ত হয়েছে এগারো জনকে, ১ নম্বর প্রদত্ত হয়েছে এগারো জনকে এবং কোনো নম্বরই প্রদান করা হয়নি পনের জনকে। প্রাপ্ত স্কোরের গড় মান হয়েছে - ১.৬৮। এখানে দেখা যাচ্ছে যে প্রশাসন দ্বারা যে টোটো জনজাতির ভাষার প্রতি তেমন কোন গুরুত্ব নেই সেটাই অধিকাংশ মানুষ জবাব দিয়েছেন।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ১০

দশ নম্বর প্রশ্নের ক্ষেত্রে দেখা গিয়েছে যে, নির্দিষ্ট সম্প্রদায় এখানে টোটো জনজাতির মানুষের তাঁদের ভাষার প্রতি কেমন আচরণ বা দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি সেই প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে ছয়টি বিকল্প এখানে রয়েছে। এক। সমস্ত সদস্যই তার

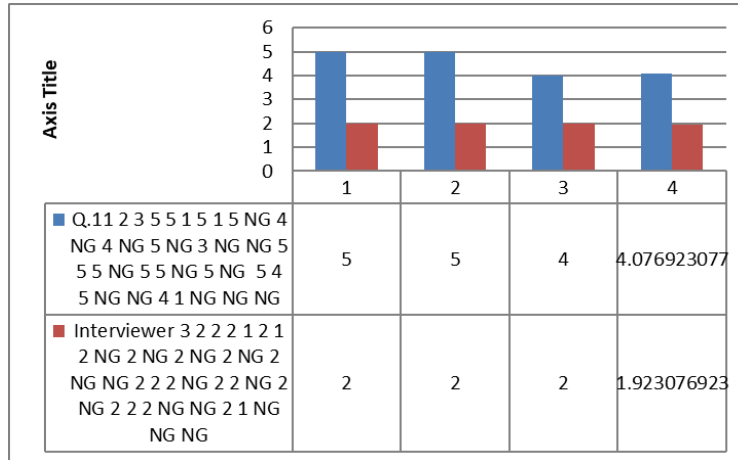
সম্প্রদায়ের ভাষাকে মূল্য দেয় বা শ্রদ্ধা করে এবং তাদের ভাষাকে আরও উন্নত পর্যায়ে দেখতে চায়। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৫। দুই। দ্বিতীয় বিকল্পে অধিকাংশ সদস্যই তাদের ভাষার প্রচলিত (continued) ব্যবহারকে সমর্থক করেন। এখানে কেউ উত্তর দিলে তার স্কোর হবে ৪। তিন। তৃতীয় বিকল্পে অনেক সদস্য ভাষা সংরক্ষণ সমর্থন করেন, কিছু সদস্য আবার উদাসীন বা নির্বিকার এমনকি কর্তৃত্বকারী (Dominant) ভাষায় অপসারিত হওয়াকে (Shift) সমর্থন করেন। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৩। চার। পরের বিকল্পটি হল- কিছু সদস্য ভাষা সংরক্ষণ সমর্থন করেন, কিছু সদস্য এব্যাপারে উদাসীন এমনকি ভাষা বদলকে সমর্থন করেন। এখানে যিনি উত্তর দিয়েছেন তার স্কোর ২। পাঁচ। কেবলমাত্র কিছু সদস্য ভাষার রক্ষনাবেক্ষনের সমর্থক, কিন্তু অধিকাংশই উদাসীন এমনকি প্রভাবশালী ভাষায় অপসৃত (shift) হওয়াকেও সমর্থন করেন। এই বিকল্পে স্কোর ১। ছয়। সর্বশেষ বিকল্প ভাষার অবলুপ্তি সম্পর্কে কেউই ভাবেন না, সকলেই কর্তৃত্বকারী ভাষার ব্যবহার পছন্দ করেন। এই বিকল্পে কেউ উত্তর দিলে তার স্কোর ০ (শূন্য)।

নির্দিষ্ট সম্প্রদায় ও তার সদস্যদের নিজস্ব ভাষার প্রতি আচরণ
(Reference community members' attitudes towards their own language)

সবথেকে বেশি উনত্রিশ জন প্রথম বিকল্পেই অর্থাৎ স্কোর ৫ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন। দ্বিতীয় বিকল্পে স্কোর ৪ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন চারজন। তৃতীয় বিকল্পে স্কোর ৩ এ মোট ছয় জন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। চতুর্থ বিকল্পে স্কোর ২ এ কোনো উত্তর পাওয়া যায় নি। ১ স্কোরের বিকল্পটিতেও কোনো উত্তর পাওয়া যায়নি। সর্বশেষ বিকল্প যার মান ০ (শূন্য) তার জন্য কোন তথ্যদাতার উত্তর পাওয়া যায়নি। এভাবে তথ্যপ্রদানকারীর দেওয়া স্কোর গুলির গড় মান হয়েছে - ৪.৫৮৯।

এবার ক্ষেত্র সমীক্ষা থেকে তথ্য সংগ্রহকারী যে স্কোর প্রদান করেছেন তা হল- ৩ স্কোর যেটি প্রদান করা হয়েছে মোট ছাব্বিশ জনকে। ২ স্কোর তেরোজনকে আর একজন উত্তর দেননি সেই সাপেক্ষে তাকে সমীক্ষক দ্বারা কোন স্কোর প্রদান করা হয়নি। এভাবে তথ্য সংগ্রহকারীর স্কোরের গড় মান হয়েছে – ২.৬৬৭। এখানে তথ্য প্রদানকারীরা প্রত্যেকে যে উত্তর দিয়েছেন তা থেকে বোঝা যাচ্ছে যে প্রায় প্রত্যেকেই তাঁদের ভাষাকে গুরুত্ব দেয়। যতই বাংলা, হিন্দি, নেপালি, আদিবাসী, মেচ, প্রতিবেশি ভূটানের জংথা ভাষা প্রভৃতি ভাষার প্রভাব থাকুক না কেন, জনজাতির মানুষ তাঁদের ভাষাকে এখনও গুরুত্ব দেয়; বিশেষ করে অধিকাংশ প্রবীণ ব্যক্তিরা তাঁদের ভাষাকেই গুরুত্ব দেয়।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ১১

ছয় নম্বর প্রশ্নে তথ্য ও নথির গুণগত মান (Quality) কেমন সেই প্রশ্নের মোট ছয়টি বিকল্প রয়েছে। এক। প্রথম বিকল্পে বলা হয়েছে এক। তথ্য উৎকৃষ্ট /খুব ভালোঃ বোধগম্য বিধি সম্মত ব্যকরণ ও শব্দভান্ডার আছে, অনেক ধরনের বই/লেখ্য এবং ভাষা সামগ্রীর নিয়ত প্রবাহ /চর্চা করা হয়, অসংখ্য উচ্চ-মান সম্পন্ন কথা ও ছবির রেকর্ড বর্তমান। এর জন্য স্কোর ৫। এই বিকল্পে পনের জন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। দুই। দ্বিতীয়টি তথ্যগুলি

ভালোঃ অন্তত এক ধরনের ব্যাকরণ বিধি কিছু শব্দকোষ, বই, সাহিত্য, দৈনন্দিন গণমাধ্যম, পর্যাপ্ত উচ্চমান সম্পন্ন সটীক শ্রাব্য ও দৃশ্যের রেকর্ডিং রয়েছে। কেউ যদি এর সাপেক্ষে উত্তর দেয় তবে স্কোর ৪। এখানে পাঁচজন টোটো মানুষ উত্তর দিয়েছেন। তিন। তৃতীয়টি হল তথ্যগুলি মোটামুটি বা বলা যায় ঠিকঠাক। অন্তত এক ধরনের পর্যাপ্ত ব্যাকরণ বিধি, কিছু শব্দকোষ, এবং বই কিন্তু কোন দৈনন্দিন গণমাধ্যম (Media) নেই। দৃশ্য ও শ্রাব্যের রেকর্ড থাকলেও তার মান কেমন দেখা হয় অথবা টীকাটিপ্পনির মান কেমন তার উপর নির্ভর করে কতটা। এক্ষেত্রে স্কোর হল ৩। এই স্কোরে দুইজন টোটো মানুষ উত্তর দিয়েছেন। চার। চতুর্থ বিকল্পটি খাপছাড়া /অসম্পূর্ণ (Fragmentary) কিনা, সেখানে কিছু ব্যাকরণ বিধি তার চিত্র (Sketches) উপস্থিত, কিছু শব্দতালিকা ব্যবহারিক বই কেবলমাত্র সীমিত ভাষাবিজ্ঞান গবেষণা কিন্তু অপর্যাপ্ত দৃশ্য ও শ্রাব্যের রেকর্ডিং উচ্চমান সম্পন্ন তালিকা না থাকলেও দৃষ্টান্ত আছে টীকা সহকারে বা ব্যাখ্যাবর্জিত ভাবে। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ২। দুই নম্বর স্কোরে একজন টোটো মানুষ উত্তর দিয়েছেন। পাঁচ। ঐ ভাষায় অপর্যাপ্ত কিছু আছে কিনা; কেবলমাত্র ব্যাকরণগত রূপরেখা, ছোট শব্দভাণ্ডার এবং খাপছাড়া কিছু লেখা বই এর অস্তিত্ব। শব্দ/কথা ও ছবির কোন রেকর্ড নেই, থাকলেও অব্যবহারযোগ্য এবং সম্পূর্ণরূপে ব্যাখ্যা বর্জিত। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর বরাদ্দ ১। এক নম্বর স্কোরে তিনজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। ছয়। ছয় নম্বরটি হল নথি বা তথ্যদি বিবর্জিতঃ কোন প্রামান্যই নেই। এখানে স্কোরের মান ০ (শূন্য)। এখানে কেউ উত্তর দেননি। তবে এই প্রশ্নে চৌদ্দজন উত্তর দেননি।

তথ্য ও নথির ধরণ ও গুণ

(Type and quality of documentation)

উল্লিখিত তালিকায় তথ্যদাতা দের দেওয়া সব স্কোরের গড় মান হয়েছে – ৪.০৭৬৯। এখানে দেখা যাচ্ছে যে উক্ত প্রশ্নের উত্তরে উভয় ক্ষেত্রেই অধিকাংশ ব্যক্তির উত্তরে NG (Not given) দেওয়া অর্থাৎ উত্তর দেননি।

এই প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে পাওয়া উত্তরকে ভিত্তি করে সমীক্ষক দ্বারা প্রদত্ত স্কোর গুলি হল – ৩, ২, ১। ৩ সূচক পেয়েছেন একজন। ২ সূচক পেয়েছেন বাইশজন আর ১ সূচক পেয়েছেন তিনজন। আর মোট চৌদ্দ জনকে কোনোরকম স্কোর প্রদান করা হয়নি। সর্বোপরি তথ্য সংগ্রাহকের স্কোরের গড় মান হয়েছে - ১.৯২৩০।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ১২

বারো নম্বর প্রশ্নের সূচীতেও ছয়টি বিকল্প দেখা গিয়েছে। একটি করে বলা যাক।এক। প্রথমেই আছে নিয়মিতভাবে সম্প্রদায়ের ৫ শতাংশেরও এর বেশি জনকে নিয়ে সফল কর্মসূচি (program) করা হয়ে থাকে যেটি সফলভাবেই হয়ে থাকে। এক্ষেত্রে স্কোরটি হল সর্বোচ্চ মান ৫। দুই। দুই নম্বরে আছে, এখানে দুটি বৈশিষ্ট্য নিয়ে কর্মসূচি (program) চালিত হয়। একটি ভালোভাবে সম্প্রদায়ের ৫ শতাংশের বেশি জনকে

নিয়ে ও আরেকটি নিয়মিত (regular) সফলভাবে (successful) কর্মসূচি (program) চালিত হয়। এই বিকল্পে কেউ উত্তর প্রদান করলে তার স্কোর ৪। তিন। তৃতীয় বিকল্পটি হল - চলনসই (fair) ভাবে নিম্নলিখিত বৈশিষ্ট্যগুলির মধ্যে একটি নিয়ে ৫ শতাংশের এর বেশি জন (এখানে টোটো মানুষ) কে যুক্ত করে কর্মসূচি চলছেঃ এক। নিয়মিত (regular) ও দুই। সফল (successful) ভাবে। এখানে যিনি বা যারা উত্তর দিয়েছেন তাঁর বা তাঁদের স্কোর ৩। দুই। চার। এর পরবর্তী বিকল্পটিতে বলা হয়েছে মৌলিক (basic) একটি কর্মসূচি রূপায়িত হয় ৫ শতাংশের কম জনকে যুক্ত করে; অনিয়মিতভাবে এবং কোন ফলাফল ছাড়া অথবা অল্প কিছু ফল সহ। এই বিকল্পের স্কোর ২। পাঁচ। পাঁচ নম্বর বিকল্পে আশাপ্রদ (Aspiring) কিছু বলা হয়েছে। কোন ভাষা কর্মসূচি নেই তবে জনগোষ্ঠীর কিছুজন এই ধরনের কর্মসূচি শুরুর কথা বলছে। এখানে স্কোরের মান ১। সবশেষে ছয় নম্বর বিকল্পে বলা হয়েছে কিছুই না (None) অর্থাৎ কোন ভাষা কর্মসূচিই নেই বা শুরু করবার কথাও কেউ ভাবছে না। এই ক্ষেত্রে স্কোরের মান ০ (শূন্য)।

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Q.12 4 2 NG 1 5 1 5 5 1 2 NG NG NG 2 1 3 NG 2 NG NG 1 NG 1 2 1 1 NG 2 3 2 NG	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2
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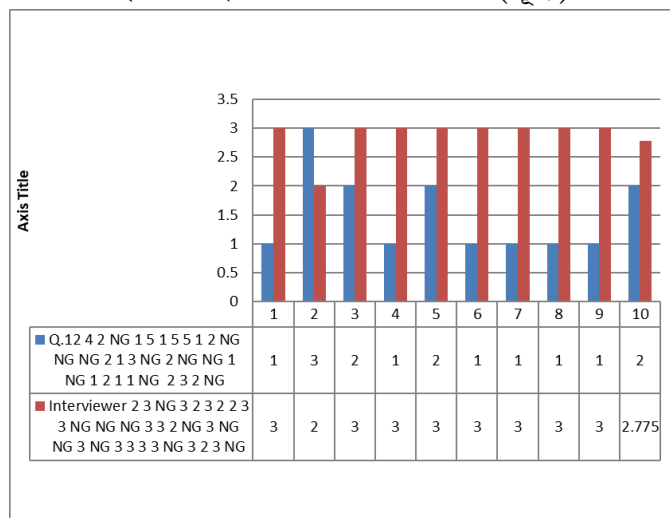

ভাষা কর্মসূচির অবস্থা
(Status of language programs)

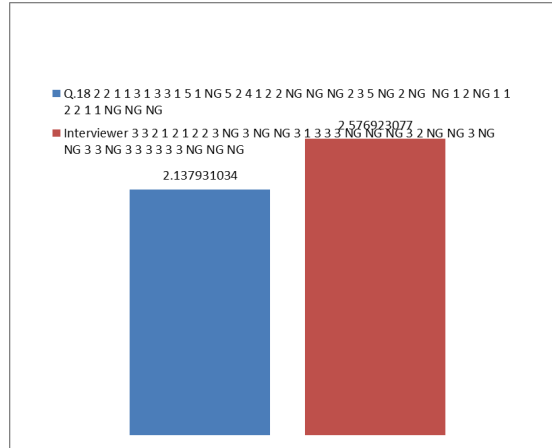
তিনজন টোটো জনগণ প্রথম বিকল্পের সাপেক্ষে অর্থাৎ স্কোর ৫ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন তিনজন। স্কোর ৪ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন মাত্র একজন। স্কোর ৩ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন তিনজন। স্কোর ২ এর স্বপক্ষে মোট নয়জন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। শেষের বিকল্পে অর্থাৎ স্কোর ০ (শূন্যে) তে কোনো জনগণ এই উত্তর দেননি। তবে একবারে কোনো বিকল্পেই উত্তর দেননি সেই সংখ্যাটাও কম নয়, দশজন এই বিশেষ প্রশ্নটির কোন উত্তর প্রদান করেননি। উল্লিখিত তালিকায় যারা উত্তর দিয়েছেন অর্থাৎ তথ্য প্রদানকারীর গড় মান হয়েছে - ২ (৫ এর মধ্যে)।

অন্যদিকে তথ্যসংগ্রহকারীর স্কোরের গড় মান হয়েছে - ২.৭৭৫ (৩ এর মধ্যে)। বারো নম্বরে ৩ স্কোর প্রদান করা হয়েছে মোট তেইশ জনকে, ২ স্কোর সাতজনকে। আর স্কোর ১ এখানে কারো উত্তরের সাপেক্ষে প্রদান করা হয়নি। তবে দশ জনকে কোন স্কোরই সমীক্ষক দ্বারা প্রদান করা হয়নি।

অর্থাৎ ভাষা কর্মসূচি নিয়ে কেউ কেউ ইতিবাচক উত্তর দিলেও কেউ কেউ নেতিবাচক উত্তর দিয়েছেন। আবার কেউ কেউ সে বিষয়ে কিছু জানান নি। প্রকৃতপক্ষে ভাষা নিয়ে খুব কম সংখ্যক মানুষই ভাবছেন। অনেকেই টোটোপাড়ার মধ্যেই জীবন অতিবাহিত করে দিয়েছেন; কিন্তু নবীন প্রজন্ম শিক্ষার প্রয়োজনে নিজের অস্তিত্ব কে বাঁচিয়ে রাখতে শিকড়ের সন্ধানে টোটো ভাষাকে মৌখিক ভাবে না রেখে লিখিত রূপ দেওয়ার জন্য ধনীরাম টোটোর তৈরি করা বর্ণমালাকে শনি টোটো স্থানীয় চিত্তরঞ্জন মেমোরিয়াল বিদ্যালয়ে শিশুদের মধ্যে পরিচিত করাচ্ছেন, শেখাচ্ছেন। ভারত টোটো, বিভোজিৎ টোটোর উদ্যোগে

‘PARAIWASHA’ (Study room) তে একসাথে প্রায় চল্লিশজন টোটো ছেলেমেয়েকে টোটো ভাষা শেখানো হয়।

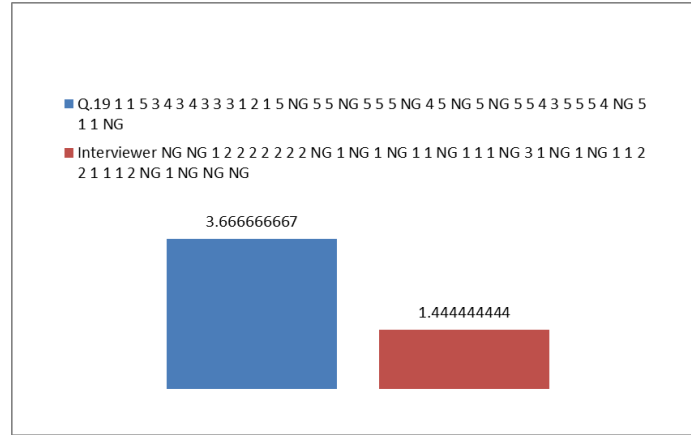
প্রশ্ন নম্বর ১৮

ইউনেস্কো প্রশ্নাবলীর দ্বিতীয় বিভাগ ভাষাগত বৈচিত্র্যের মধ্যে অন্যতম প্রশ্ন এটি। কিভাবে বিভিন্ন ভাষায় দূরদর্শনে অনুষ্ঠান সম্প্রচারিত হয় এবং তা নিয়ে ছয়টি বিকল্প আঠার নম্বর প্রশ্নে রয়েছে। যেগুলি হল – এক। প্রতিটি ভাষা সমান সম্প্রচারের সময় পায়। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৫। দুই। বেশ কিছু ভাষা ভালো মাত্রায় সম্প্রচারের সময় পায়। এর স্বপক্ষে একজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। এই বিকল্পে কেউ উত্তর দিলে তাঁর স্কোর ৪। তিন। দুই বা ততোধিক ভাষাই ব্যাপক ভাবে সময় পায় (৩)। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৩। চার। একটি ভাষাই ব্যাপক সম্প্রচারিত হয় কিন্তু অন্য ভাষাতেও ভালো সম্প্রচার হয়। এই বিকল্পে যে বা যিনি উত্তর দিয়েছেন তাঁদের স্কোর ২। মোট দশজন এই নির্দিষ্ট বিকল্পে উত্তর দিয়েছেন। পাঁচ। দূরদর্শনে সম্প্রচারের ৯০% - এর বেশি সময় কেবলমাত্র একটি ভাষা দ্বারা প্রভাবিত হয়ে থাকে। ছয়। শেষ বিকল্পটি হল কেবলমাত্র একটি ভাষাই দূরদর্শনে প্রতিনিধিত্ব করে থাকে (স্কোর ০)।

বিভিন্ন ভাষায় কিভাবে দূরদর্শনে অনুষ্ঠান সম্প্রচারিত হয়

(How is TV presence (broadcast time) distributed across the various languages?

প্রথম বিকল্পে অর্থাৎ স্কোর ৫ এ তিনজন মাত্র উত্তর দিয়েছেন। স্কোর ৪ এ এখানে একজন মাত্র উত্তর দিয়েছেন। স্কোর ৩ এ চারজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। স্কোর ১ এ এগারোজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। ০ (শূন্য) এ কেউ উত্তর প্রলদান করেননি। কোনো বিকল্পেই উত্তর দেননি এগারো জন। এখানে তথ্যপ্রদানকারীদের থেকে মিশ্রিত উত্তর পাওয়া গিয়েছে। স্কোরের গড় মান হয়েছে ২.১৩৭৯ বা ২.১৪। সমীক্ষক দ্বারা প্রদত্ত স্কোরগুলি যথাক্রমে ৩ স্কোর পেয়েছেন আঠারজন। স্কোর ২ পেয়েছেন পাঁচজন আর স্কোর ১ পেয়েছেন তিনজন। আর চৌদ্দজনকে কোন নম্বর প্রদান করা হয়নি অর্থাৎ উত্তরদাতাদের থেকে যথোপযুক্ত উত্তর পাওয়া যায়নি তাই। মোট গড় মান হয়েছে - ২.৫৭৬।

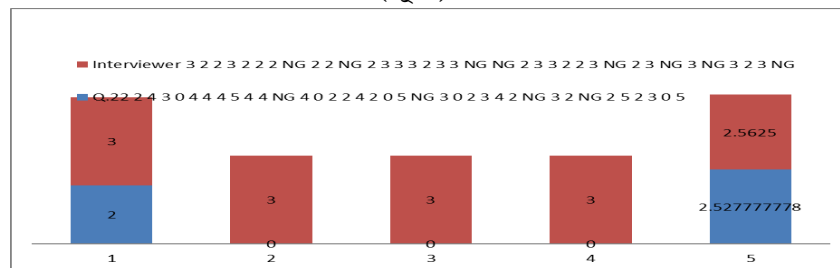
প্রশ্ন নম্বর ১৯

এই ভাষাটিকে উচ্চ অভ্যন্তরীণ (উপভাষাগত ভাবে) বৈচিত্র্যের বৈশিষ্ট্য রয়েছে কিনা সেটা বলতে গিয়ে ইউনেস্কো র প্রশ্নাবলীতে ঊনিশ নম্বর প্রশ্নে (পাঁচটি বিকল্প) যে বিকল্প গুলি রয়েছে তা হল - এক। এই ভাষায় খুব উচ্চ অভ্যন্তরীণ বৈচিত্র্য আছে। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর হল – ৫। দুই। উচ্চ অভ্যন্তরীণ বৈচিত্র্য রয়েছে। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৪। তিন। মাঝারি অভ্যন্তরীণ বৈচিত্র্য। এখানে যারা উত্তর দিয়েছেন তাঁদের স্কোর ৩। চার। খুব অল্প অভ্যন্তরীণ বৈচিত্র্য রয়েছে। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ২। পাঁচ। স্বভাবত কোন অভ্যন্তরীণ বৈচিত্র্য নেই। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ১।

ভাষাটিকে উপভাষাগত ভাবে কোন বৈচিত্র্য আছে কিনা
(Would you say this language is characterized by high internal dialectal diversity)

টোটো ভাষায় কোন উপভাষা (Dialect) নেই। ভাষাগত ভাবে তার বৈচিত্র্য আছে কিনা সে প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে মিশ্র উত্তর দিয়েছেন তথ্যদাতারা। স্কোর ৫ এর জন্য উত্তর দিয়েছেন পনেরজন। স্কোর ৪ এ মোট পাঁচজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। স্কোর ৩ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন ছয়জন। স্কোর ২ এ কেউ উত্তর প্রদান করেন নি। আবার স্কোর ১ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন ছয়জন। আবার মোট উত্তর দেননি মোট আটজন। প্রশ্নের ধরনটি অনুধাবণ করতে অনেকেরই সময় লেগেছে। সেই অনুযায়ী তথ্য যারা দিয়েছেন তাঁদের স্কোরের গড় মানটি হল- ৩.৬৬৬।

আবার অপরপক্ষে তথ্য সংগ্রহকারীর দেওয়া নম্বরগুলি হল – ৩, ২, ১। স্কোর ৩ দেওয়া হয়েছে একজনকে, স্কোর ২ মোট দশজনকে, স্কোর ১ দেওয়া হয়েছে ষোল জনকে আর কোনো স্কোর দেওয়া হয়নি (NG) মোট তেরো জনকে। এভাবে স্কোরের ভিত্তিতে প্রাপ্ত গড় মান হল - ১.৪৪৪।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ২২

বাইশ নম্বর প্রশ্নে বলা হয়েছে উপভাষা থাকলে সেগুলি বক্তাদের মধ্যে কতটা সমান। এর উত্তর পেতে গিয়ে যে বিকল্প গুলির সম্মুখীন হতে হয়েছে তা হল - এক। প্রত্যেক উপভাষার সমান সংখ্যক বক্তা রয়েছে (৫)। এই বিকল্পে যিনি উত্তর দিয়েছেন তাঁর স্কোর ৫। দুই। বেশ কিছু উপভাষায় একটা নির্দিষ্ট আকারের বক্তা রয়েছে। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৪। তিন। দুটি উপভাষা প্রাধান্য পায়। এখানে যিনি উত্তর দিয়েছেন তাঁর স্কোর ৩। চার। এবার চতুর্থ বিকল্পে রয়েছে একটি উপভাষা কর্তৃত্বকারী কিন্তু, অন্য উপভাষাগুলিতেও ভালো সংখ্যক বক্তা/কথক রয়েছে। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ২। পাঁচ। ২/৩ অর্থাৎ তিনভাগের দুইভাগ মানুষ বক্তা একটি উপভাষা ব্যবহার করেন। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ১। ছয়। শেষ বিকল্পে বলা হয়েছে একটি ভাষাই মুখ্যত সবাই ব্যবহার করেন। এখানে স্কোর হল ০ (শূন্য)।

উপভাষাগুলি সমভাবে বক্তাদের মধ্যে ব্যবহৃত হয় কিনা
(How equal are the dialects in speaker numbers)

স্কোর ৫ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন চারজন। স্কোর ৪ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন নয়জন। আবার স্কোর ৩ এ পাঁচজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। উল্লিখিত প্রশ্নের এই নির্দিষ্ট চার নম্বর বিকল্পটিতে অর্থাৎ স্কোর ২ তে সব থেকে বেশি মোট দশজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। পাঁচ নম্বর বিকল্পটিতে অর্থাৎ স্কোর ১ এ কেউই উত্তর দেননি। স্কোর ০ (শূন্য) তে উত্তর দিয়েছেন আটজন। আর কোনো বিকল্পেই উত্তর দেননি মোট চারজন। বাইশ নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে বলা যায় যে টোটো ভাষাটির কোন উপভাষা নেই তাই কোন্ উপভাষায় কতজন বক্তা রয়েছে এটা বলা নিরর্থক। টোটো ভাষা স্বয়ং একটি উপভাষা। উল্লিখিত প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে ছয়টি বিকল্প রয়েছে আর সেই বিকল্প অনুযায়ী ভিন্ন জন ভিন্ন মত পোষণ করেছেন, সেই অনুযায়ী গড় মান হয়েছে ২.৫৬২৫। একটি ভাষাই আবালবৃদ্ধবনিতা ব্যবহার করে থাকেন, যতই অন্য ভাষার প্রভাব থাকুক।

অপরদিকে সমীক্ষাকারী দ্বারা আটজনকে কোন স্কোর প্রদান করা হয়নি। স্কোর ৩ আর স্কোর ২ দেওয়া হয়েছে যথাক্রমে - আঠার ও চৌদ্দ জনকে। আটজনকে কোনো স্কোর প্রদান করা হয়নি। সমীক্ষাকারী দ্বারা গড় মান হয়েছে - ২.৫২৭।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ২৩

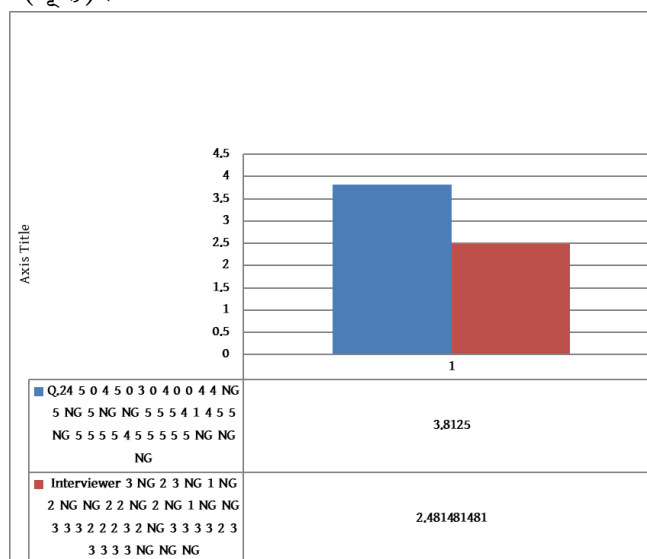
মর্যাদা, অবস্থানের দিক থেকে ভাষাগুলি কতটা সমান সেই প্রশ্নের (তেইশ) সেখানে বিকল্পগুলি হল – এক। প্রথম বিকল্পে উপভাষাগুলি সমমর্যাদা পূর্ণ। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর হল ৫। দুই। দ্বিতীয় বিকল্পে বেশ কিছু উপভাষার মর্যাদা/ প্রতিপত্তিতে সমতা রয়েছে। এখানে যারা উত্তর দিয়েছে তাঁদের স্কোর ৪। তিন। তৃতীয় বিকল্পে অন্য উপভাষার তুলনায় দুটি উপভাষার অধিক প্রতিপত্তি রয়েছে। এখানে স্কোর ৩। চার। চতুর্থ বিকল্পে অন্যান্য সমস্ত উপভাষার চেয়ে একটি উপভাষার উচ্চ মর্যাদা/খ্যাতি রয়েছে। এখানে যারা উত্তর দিয়েছেন তাঁদের স্কোর ২। পাঁচ। পঞ্চম বিকল্পে অন্য সব উপ ভাষার তুলনায় একটি উপভাষার নিম্ন মর্যাদা/অখ্যাতি রয়েছে। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ১।

প্রতীকী অবস্থান ও মর্যাদার বিচারে উপভাষাগুলি সমান কিনা
(How equal are the dialects in symbolic status and prestige)

বাইশ নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রথম বিকল্পে অর্থাৎ স্কোর ৫ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন আঠাশ জন। দ্বিতীয় বিকল্পে স্কোর ৪ এ মোট দুইজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। তৃতীয় বিকল্পে অর্থাৎ স্কোর ৩ এ এখানে কেউ উত্তর দেননি। চতুর্থ বিকল্পে স্কোর ২ তে পাঁচজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন আর পঞ্চম বিকল্পে স্কোর ১ এ মোট চারজন উত্তর প্রদান করেছেন। আর কোনো বিকল্পেই উত্তর দেননি একজন। এইভাবে তথ্যদাতাদের থেকে পাওয়া স্কোরগুলির গড় মান হয়েছে – ৪.১৫৩। যদি সত্যিই একটি ভাষার গুরুত্ব নিয়ে বলা হয় তবে প্রতিটি ভাষার সমান মর্যাদা

রয়েছে। তথ্য প্রদানকারীরা অনেকেই সেই অনুযায়ী তাঁদের উত্তর প্রদান করেছেন। যা থেকে ভাষা সম্পর্কে তাঁদের উদার মানসিকতার পরিচয় পাওয়া যায় কিন্তু বাস্তব চিত্র নিয়ে যদি বলা যায় সেক্ষেত্রে বিষয়টি তো বিপ্রতীপ। যদি ব্যবহারিক, কার্যক্ষেত্রে সব জায়গায় অকপটে টোটোরা তাঁদের মাতৃভাষা ব্যবহার করতে পারত তবেই ভাষাটি তার আসল মর্যাদা রক্ষায় সমর্থ হতো। বাইশ নম্বর প্রশ্নের পাঁচটি বিকল্প রয়েছে এবং বেশিরভাগ ক্ষেত্রে উত্তর যারা দিয়েছেন প্রথম বিকল্পটির সাপেক্ষেই উত্তর দিয়েছেন। তাই তথ্য সংগ্রহকারী তার নিজের দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি অনুযায়ী স্কোর প্রদান করতে সমর্থ হয়নি। কেবলমাত্র স্কোর ২ প্রদান করা হয়েছে দুইজনকে। আর আট ত্রিশ জনকে কোনো রকম স্কোর প্রদান করা হয়নি। এভাবে তথ্য সংগ্রহকারীর স্কোরের গড় নম্বর হয়েছে – ২। এখানে যে স্কোরের দুটি গড় মান পাওয়া গিয়েছে তা প্রকৃতপক্ষে নির্ভরযোগ্য নয় কিন্তু জনজাতির নিজেদের ভাষার প্রতি ভালোবাসার দিকটি দিয়ে বিচার করলে টোটো (উপভাষা নেই) অন্য ভাষার মতো সম মর্যাদাপূর্ণ।

প্রশ্ন নম্বর ২৪

চব্বিশ নম্বর অর্থাৎ প্রশ্নাবলীর শেষ প্রশ্নটির মোট ছয়টি বিকল্প রয়েছে। বিকল্পগুলি হল – এক। খুব উচ্চ শৈলীগত বৈচিত্র্য, প্রায়ই ব্যবহৃত হয়। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৫। দুই। দ্বিতীয় বিকল্পে উচ্চ শৈলীগত বৈচিত্র্য, প্রায় ব্যবহৃত হয়। এই বিকল্পে যিনি বা যারা উত্তর দিয়েছেন তাঁদের স্কোর ৪। তিন। তৃতীয় বিকল্পে মাঝারি মানের অলঙ্কার বৈচিত্র্য, প্রায় ব্যবহৃত হয়। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর ৩। চার। চতুর্থ বিকল্পে কিছু শৈলীগত বৈচিত্র্য কখনও কখনও দেখা যায়। এখানে স্কোর ২। পাঁচ। পঞ্চম বিকল্পে (অল্পই অলঙ্কার শৈলী, কদাচিৎ ব্যবহৃত হয়। এই বিকল্পের সাপেক্ষে স্কোর ১। ছয়। ষষ্ঠ বিকল্পে কোন শৈলীগত বৈচিত্র্য নেই। এই বিকল্পের জন্য স্কোর হল ০ (শূন্য)।

ভাষাটির উচ্চ শৈলীগত বৈচিত্র্য রয়েছে কিনা এবং দৈনন্দিন কথোপকথনে বিভিন্ন রকমের রেজিস্টার শৈলী তা ব্যবহৃত হয় কিনা

(Would you say this language is characterized by high stylistic diversity, i.e., a variety of different registers and styles are commonly us)

উল্লিখিত প্রশ্নের বিকল্পগুলির সাপেক্ষে স্কোর ৫ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন আঠারজন। স্কোর ৪ এ মোট সাতজন উত্তর দিয়েছেন। আবার স্কোর ৩ এ উত্তর দিয়েছেন মাত্র একজন। স্কোর ২ এর স্বপক্ষে কেউ উত্তর দেননি। স্কোর ১ এ একজন আর স্কোর ০ (শূন্য) তে মোট পাঁচজন টোটো মানুষ উত্তর দিয়েছেন। আর মোট আটজন কোনোরকম বিকল্পের সাপেক্ষেই কোনো উত্তর প্রদান করেননি। উল্লিখিত প্রশ্নের উত্তরে কেউ

বলেছেন যে ভাষাটির কোন শৈলী নেই (যেমন – শুভজিৎ টোটো, ঊর্মিলা টোটো), কেউ বলেছেন উচ্চ শৈলীগত বৈচিত্র্য রয়েছে (ধনীরাম টোটো, ভারত টোটো, শিবা টোটো, মঙ্গলি টোটো প্রমুখ) । আসলে ভাষাটির মধ্যে শৈলীগত ভাবে বৈচিত্র্য রয়েছে। তথ্যপ্রদানকারী দের দেওয়া স্কোরের গড় মান হল – ৩.৮১২৫। আর অপরদিকে সমীক্ষাকারী দ্বারা স্কোর ৩ প্রদত্ত হয়েছে মোট পনেরজনকে, স্কোর ২ প্রদত্ত হয়েছে দশজনকে আর স্কোর ১ দুইজনকে। স্কোরগুলির গড় মান হয়েছে ২.৪৮১৪।

স্কোরের বিশ্লেষণ ও ব্যাখ্যা

উল্লিখিত সারণিতে টোটো ভাষায় এখানে প্রথম তথ্যদাতা হলেন – ভারত টোটো। যিনি বর্তমান সময়ে টোটো জনজাতির ভাষা, সংস্কৃতি ও তাঁদের উন্নয়নের জন্য অক্লান্ত পরিশ্রম করে যাচ্ছেন। ভারত টোটো পশ্চিমবঙ্গের যাদবপুর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় থেকে ইতিহাস বিভাগ থেকে ২০২২ সালে স্নাতকোত্তর পাশ করেন তারপর থেকে সম্পূর্ণ সময় টোটো জনজাতির শিক্ষা, সংস্কৃতির উন্নয়ন ও তাঁদের সম্প্রদায়কে নিয়ে লেখালেখি করতে ব্যস্ত। ভারত নিজে বাংলা,হিন্দি, ইংরেজি, টোটো,নেপালি,সাদরি, অল্পস্বল্প বোডো সহ প্রায় সাতটি ভাষায় দক্ষ। তাঁর মতে টোটোদের সংখ্যা এই মুহূর্তে ১৬৫২ জন এবং এরা সবাই টোটোতে কথা বলেন। টোটো পাড়ায় প্রভাবশালী ভাষার প্রভাবে(বাংলা, নেপালি) টোটো ভাষার ক্ষতি হচ্ছে। টোটোপাড়ার বাইরে ভাষাটি বিরলভাবে ব্যবহৃত হয়। কোন চ্যানেলে এই ভাষার প্রোগ্রাম সম্প্রচারিত হয়না। যদিও এখানে একটি বিষয় উল্লেখ্য তা হল- বর্তমান ডিজিটালি জগতে টোটোদের বিভিন্ন অনুষ্ঠান মুঠোফোনের মাধ্যমে অনেকের কাছেই পৌঁছে যায়। টোটোপাড়ায় ভারত তার বন্ধু বিভোজিৎ টোটো ছেলে মেয়েদেরকে কম্পিউটারের মাধ্যমে ডিজিটাল লিটারেসি প্রোগ্রামের সঙ্গে যুক্ত এবং তাঁদের প্রশিক্ষণ দেন। টোটো যে লিপি (script) সেটি নিয়েও সে কাজ করছে।

এরপর এখানে আসা যাক ধনীরাম টোটোর প্রসঙ্গে। তিনি টোটো জনজাতির উত্থান পতনের একজন কান্ডারি। তিনি তথাকথিত ভাবে বেশিদূর পড়াশুনা করেননি তবে টোটো জনজাতির উন্নয়নের একজন পুরোধা। তাঁর নিরলস প্রয়াসে টোটোরা তাঁদের ভাষায় পেয়েছে বর্ণমালা। (টোটো বর্ণমালায় রয়েছে ১৮ টি ব্যাঞ্জনবর্ণ (Consonants), ১২ টি স্বরবর্ণ (Vowels) এবং দুটি যৌগিকস্বরধ্বনি (Dipthongs)।

এই বর্ণমালার জন্য তিনি পদ্মশ্রী পেয়েছেন ২০২৩ এর ২৭ শে মার্চ। একটি মৌখিক ভাষাকে লিখিত রূপে পেতে তাঁদের সাহিত্য সম্ভার, মুখের ভাষা একদিন লিখিতরূপে প্রকাশ পাবে সেই আশা নিয়ে চিত্তরঞ্জন টোটো মেমোরিয়াল বিদ্যালয়ে টোটোপাড়ার ছেলে-মেয়েদের প্রতি শুক্রবার করে টোটো ভাষা শেখানো হয়। ক্লাস নেন শনিটোটো।

প্রশ্নাবলী নিয়ে জিজ্ঞেস করলে ধনীরাম টোটো বলেন যে –

এক। টোটো ভাষা সবাই বলেন।

দুই। কথক সংখ্যা ১৬১৬ জন (২০২১ এর মার্চ মাসে)।

তিন। ভাষাটি সার্বিকভাবে সব জায়গায় ব্যবহৃত হয় বলে তিনি মনে করেন তবে নতুন এলাকায় বিরলভাবে ব্যবহৃত হয়।

চার। টোটো ভাষায় গল্প, উপন্যাস, কবিতা লেখা হয়। তিনি নিজেই লেখালেখি করেন। ভাষাটি খুবই উৎকৃষ্ট ও মিষ্টি বলে তিনি মনে করেন।

পাঁচ। ভাষা সম্পর্কে তিনি খুবই আশাবাদী, তখনও তিনি পদ্মশ্রী পাননি।

ছয় । টোটো ভাষা যেহেতু টোটোপাড়াতেই বলা হয় তাই এই ভাষার মধ্যে তেমন বৈচিত্র্য নেই অর্থাৎ উপভাষাগতভাবে মাঝারি বৈচিত্র্য রয়েছে। তবে ভাষাটির মধ্যে অভ্যন্তরীণ বৈচিত্র্য রয়েছে। একটু খেদের স্বরে তিনি বলেন যে সব আঞ্চলিক ভাষাগুলির যেমন মর্যাদা পাওয়া উচিত তেমন পায়না। উপরিউক্ত সারণিতে তথ্যদাতা দের মধ্যে বারোজন হল ছাত্র বাকিরা অধিকাংশ কৃষিকাজ, শ্রমিক, ব্যবসা, গাড়ির চালক এবং গৃহবধূ।

মনোজ টোটো বলেন যে সকলেই তারা টোটো ভাষা বলেন এবং টোটো ভাষা বলতে চান সেজন্য সরকারের সহায়তা প্রয়োজন। তাই সরকার উদ্যোগ না নিলে আগামী দিনে ভাষাটির অবস্থা কোন্ জায়গায় গিয়ে দাঁড়াবে জানেন না।

সানি টোটো নবম শ্রেণীতে পড়া ছাত্র সেও প্রায় একই রকম কথা বলেন। অবিনাশ, সজিত, শুভজিৎ কেউই নিজের ভাষাকে অমর্যাদা করেন না। সকলেই বাস্তবটা জানেন যে বাংলা, হিন্দি, ইংরেজি এই ভাষাগুলি না জানলে বাইরের জগত অর্থাৎ টোটোপাড়ার বাইরের জগতের সঙ্গে সংযোগ স্থাপন করা করা যাবে না। কিন্তু মাতৃভাষা সেটা যদি হারিয়ে যায় তবে তো তাঁদের শিকড় টাই হারিয়ে যাবে, হারিয়ে যাবে একটা জনজাতির অস্তিত্ব।

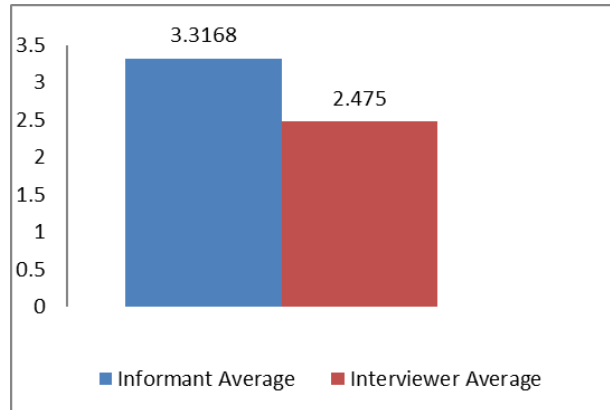
বকুল টোটো যিনি রাজনৈতিক ভাবে একটু সক্রিয় আবার পেশাগত ভাবে ব্যবসা করেন; তিনি নিজের ভাষা নিয়ে যথেষ্ট ভাবেন (তার সঙ্গে কথোপকথনের মাধ্যমে জানতে পারা যায়) কিন্তু সক্রিয় ভাবে কিছু করেন কিনা তাঁর উদাহরণ পাওয়া যায়নি। ধনীরাম টোটো যে বর্ণমালা তৈরি করেছেন তা নিয়ে বলেন যে – ধনীরাম টোটো যে বর্ণমালা তৈরি করেছেন সেটাকে তিনি মান্যতা দিতে নারাজ। তিনি বলেন যে যদি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় বা কোন ভাষাবিদ্ যদি এই লিপিকে স্বীকৃতি দিতেন তবে তা গ্রহণীয়। টোটো মহিলারা অধিকাংশরাই বাড়ির বা এলাকার বাইরে খুব কম বের হন। তবে ভাষা সম্পর্কে খুব বেশি যে ভাবেন তা নয়। তবে নিজের ভাষায় কথা বলতে সবাই আগ্রহী এবং ছেলে মেয়েরা যদি এই ভাষায় পড়াশুনা করতে পারত তবে খুব ভালো হতো যেমন বলেন পাশাপাশি এটাও বলেন যে যুগের সঙ্গে তাল মিলিয়ে শুধু তো টোটো ভাষা জানলেই হবে না, তবে জীবিকা নির্বাহের জন্য অন্য ভাষাকেও জানতে, বুঝতে ও শিখতে হবে। প্রত্যেকেই এই এলাকায় প্রায় একের অধিক ভাষা জানেন। মাতৃভাষা (টোটো) ব্যতীত বাংলা, হিন্দি, মেচ,আদিবাসী অর্থাৎ সাদরি ভাষা, নেপালি – এই ভাষাগুলি অধিকাংশ লোকজন জানেন। ছাত্র- ছাত্রীরা হিন্দি ও ইংরেজি (খুব কম সংখ্যক) জানেন। গৃহবধূ থেকে নবীন ছেলে মেয়ে সকলেই হিন্দি গান, বাংলা গান বেশ পছন্দ করেন। তবে টোটো গান এগুলো তারা আনুষ্ঠানিক ভাবে করেন।

উপরিউক্ত সারণি গুলিতে দেখতে পাওয়া যাচ্ছে যে তথ্য প্রদানকারী সকলেই যে প্রশ্নের উত্তর দিয়েছেন তার গড় মান সর্বনিম্ন ১.৯২ থেকে সর্বোচ্চ ৪.৯৭৫। ভাষার সজীবতা (Vitality) ও বিপন্নতা (Endangerment) বিচার করতে গেলে ভাষাটি কতটা বিপন্ন তা নির্ণয় করা যাক।

ভাষাটি নিরাপদ হলে (Safe) নির্ভরযোগ্য সূচক – ৫
অসুরক্ষিত হলে (Vulnerable) – ৪
স্পষ্টভাবে বিপন্ন হলে (Definitely Endangered) -৩
গুরুতরভাবে বিপন্ন হলে (Severely Endangered) -২
সমালোচনার দৃষ্টিতে বিপন্ন হলে (Critically Endangered) -১
লুপ্ত হলে (Extinct) - ০

এই অংশে তথ্যপ্রদানকারী এবং সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণকারীর প্রদত্ত স্কোরগুলি পর্যালোচনা করা হয়েছে। যে নির্দিষ্ট প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে তথ্যপ্রদানকারীরা উত্তর দিয়েছিলেন সেই গড় মান গুলি হল যথাক্রমে- ৪.৯৭৫ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৪), ৩.৪১০৩ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৫), ২.১৭ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৬), ৪.৭২৭ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৭), ২.৬০৮৭ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৮), ১.৯২ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ৯), ৪.৫৮৯ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ১০), ৪.০৭৬ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ১১), ২ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ১২), ২.১৩৭ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ১৮), ৩.৬৬ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ১৯), ২.৫২৭৭ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ২২), ৪.১৫৩ (প্রশ্ন নম্বর ২৩), ৩.৮১২(প্রশ্ন নম্বর ২৪)। উপরিউক্ত গড় মান গুলির আবার গড় নির্ণয় করে যে মান হয়েছে তা হল- ৩.৩১৬৮। অর্থাৎ তথ্যপ্রদানকারীর স্কোর অনুযায়ী ভাষাটি বিপন্নতার তিন ও চার নম্বর বিভাগের মধ্যে অবস্থান করছে। ইউনেস্কোর প্রশ্নাবলীর বিপন্নতার বিভাগ অনুযায়ী টোটো ভাষা এখানে স্পষ্টভাবে বিপন্ন (Definitely Endangered)।

এবার সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণকারী দ্বারা প্রদত্ত স্কোর গুলির গড় মান যথাক্রমে - দুই নম্বর প্রশ্নের সাপেক্ষে সর্বোচ্চ সূচক ৩ প্রদান করেছেন। তিন নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে সকলের গড় মান ২.২৮৫। চার নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে ২.৯৭৫। পাঁচ নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে ২.৫৪। ছয় নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে ২.৬৯। সাত নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে ২.৭২৭। আট নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে ২.৫। নয় নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে ১.৬৮। দশ নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে ২.৬৬৭। এগারো নম্বর প্রশ্নের প্রেক্ষিতে ১.৯২৩১। বারো নম্বরের গড় মান ২.৭৭৫। তের নম্বরের গড় মান হয়েছে ২.৭৮। চৌদ্দ নম্বরের প্রেক্ষিতে ২.৬৫। পনের নম্বরের প্রেক্ষিতে গড় মান ২.৭২৫। সতের নম্বরের ক্ষেত্রে ১.৯৬২। ঊনিশ নম্বরের ক্ষেত্রে ১.৪৪৪। একুশের ক্ষেত্রে গড় মান ৩। বাইশের ক্ষেত্রে ২.৫৬৩। তেইশ নম্বরের ক্ষেত্রে ২ আর চব্বিশ নম্বর প্রশ্নের গড় মান হয়েছে ২.৪৮১৪৮। ষোল এবং কুড়ি নম্বরের ক্ষেত্রে কোন গড় মান নেই, ষোল নম্বর প্রশ্ন অনুযায়ী (স্থানীয় বিদ্যালয়ে কতগুলি ভাষা ব্যবহার করা হয়) কোনো উত্তরদাতা যদি বলেছেন দুটি ভাষা তবে তার মান 'ঘ'। আবার কেউ তিনটি বললে তার উত্তরের সাপেক্ষে 'গ' কে চিহ্নিত করা হয়েছে। ষোল নম্বরে মোট পাঁচটি বিকল্প রয়েছে সেই অনুযায়ী 'ক', 'খ', 'গ', 'ঘ', এবং 'ঙ' দ্বারা তা চিহ্নিত করা হয়েছে। কুড়ি নম্বরেও একজন টোটো মানুষ প্রতিদিন কতগুলি উপভাষা শ্রবণ করেন, কথা বলেন, পড়েন আর লেখেন তা ক, খ, গ, ঘ, ঙ এবং চ দ্বারা বোঝানো হয়েছে।

এবার এখানে সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণকারীর দেওয়া গড় স্কোর গুলির আবার গড় নির্ণয় করে (দুই থেকে চব্বিশ নম্বর প্রশ্নের গড় মান গুলির গড় এখানে দেখানো হল। ষোল ও কুড়ি নম্বর ব্যতীত।) যে গড় মানটি হয়েছে তা হল – ২.৪৭৫। অর্থাৎ ইউনেস্কোর বিপন্নতার মান অনুযায়ী ভাষাটি গুরুতরভাবে বিপন্ন (Severely Endangered) । অর্থাৎ সার্বিকভাবে টোটো ভাষাটি যে বিপন্ন তা গড় মান গুলি থেকে স্পষ্ট। নিম্নে তথ্যপ্রদানকারী এবং সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণকারীর সার্বিক গড় মানের তুলনামূলক বার চিত্রটি দেখানো হলঃ

উপসংহার

উপরিউক্ত আলোচনা ও বিশ্লেষণের মাধ্যমে টোটো ভাষা যে স্পষ্টভাবে বিপন্ন (Definitely Endangered) সেই চিত্রটি সামনে এলো। এখানে প্রসঙ্গক্রমে উল্লেখ্ করা যেতে পারে বিশ্বের বৃহৎ ভাষা পরিংখ্যান নির্ণয়কারী এথনলগের। যখন একটি ভাষার চর্চা ঘর-পরিবারের গণ্ডি পেরিয়ে প্রতিষ্ঠানেও হয় তখন তা প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক। আবার যখন শুধুমাত্র ঘরের মধ্যে এবং জনজাতির নিজেদের মধ্যে ভাষাটি সীমিত তখন তা স্থিতিশীল। আর ভাষাটি বিপন্ন হয় তখনই যখন শিশুদেরকে ভাষাটি আর শেখানো হয়না। যখন ভাষাটি কেউই আর ব্যবহার করেনা এবং কোনরকম জাতিগত কোনো পরিচিতি থাকে না তখন ভাষাটি বিলুপ্ত বলে ধরে নেওয়া হয়। এথনলগের মাপকাঠিতেও ভাষাটি বিপন্ন।

বিশ্বের ৩,১৯৩ টি বিপন্ন ভাষার মধ্যে টোটো ভাষাটিও বিপন্ন। ভাষা নিয়ে সরকারের সুপরিকল্পিত যোজনা ও টোটোজনজাতিদের মধ্যেকার উদ্যোগী কিছু মানুষ জনের সহায়তায় (ইতিমধ্যে যে উদ্যোগ জনজাতির মানুষ নিয়েছেন তা যথেষ্ট নয়) যদি ভাষাটি বিপন্নতার স্তর থেকে কখনো সুরক্ষিত স্তরে উপনীত হয় তবে ভাষা নিয়ে ভাষার বিপন্নতা নিয়ে যে গবেষকরা কাজ করছেন তা সার্থক হবে। কারণ অদূর

ভবিষ্যতে যে পৃথিবীর অর্ধেক ভাষা হারিয়ে যাবে বলে ভাষাবিদ্‌রা যে অনুমান করেছেন সেই হারিয়ে যাওয়া থেকে একটি ভাষা রক্ষা পাবে, রক্ষা পাবে একটি সভ্যতা।

গ্রন্থপঞ্জি

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Analysis of Lexical Errors and Cross-linguistic Influences in French Language Learning: A Case of Tamil-speaking Students with English l2

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A B S T R A C T

This research investigated the lexical errors produced by Tamil-speaking French learners in a multilingual context with English L2. The study explores errors arising from cross-linguistic influences through a class test involving translation and vocabulary activities conducted at Nirmala College for Women, Coimbatore. The analysis allowed the categorization of different lexical errors such as relexification, false cognates and calquing and identified the sources of these errors. The results suggested that most transfer errors originated from the learners' L2, English, owing to the typological similarities between English and French. Identifying these errors can help implement specific pedagogical strategies to address these cross-linguistic errors.

1. Introduction

India has a rich linguistic landscape, with 22 languages officially recognised and the subcontinent is home to hundreds of different dialects, making it a multilingual country. It is common for people in India to be multilingual, speaking two or more languages, as these languages are in continuous interaction, and speakers are not usually restricted to a particular geographical area. For a number of reasons, learning English as a second language is common: it is an official language of India, the instructional language in schools and colleges, usually serves as the lingua franca for interstate communication and holds a significant status in society. Furthermore, the increasing demands of globalization and international mobility encourage people, especially young people to learn additional European languages, such as French, to enhance their career prospects.

The current research was conducted in Tamil Nadu, a prominent state in South India. Our study involves three languages: Tamil (L1), English (L2) and French (L3). Tamil belongs to the Dravidian language family and is recognized as a classical language with a rich linguistic and cultural history. English, a Germanic language belonging to the Indo-European language family, was introduced to India through British colonization. French is one of the most studied foreign languages in the world and is a member of the Romance branch of Indo-European languages. In Tamil Nadu, French is often chosen as an optional additional language in schools and institutions of higher education. However, learners often do not acquire the linguistic competencies outlined

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in the CEFR, due to challenges such as lexical interference. This research aimed to investigate one such challenge faced by the learners: lexical cross-linguistic transfer.

When it comes to multilingualism and third language acquisition (TLA), cross-linguistic influences and interlanguage have been key topics of recent research. Many studies have been done in this area, but no significant research has been done in the multilingual context of L1 Tamil, L2 English, and L3 French. The objectives of this research were to examine lexical cross-linguistic errors in the class test of French learners and to determine the sources of these errors among Tamil-speaking learners of French (L3) with English (L2).

To achieve these objectives, a group of French learners was invited to participate in the data collection process. The cross-linguistic errors were then identified, categorized, analyzed, and explained. The research article is further subdivided into theoretical background, methodology, results and discussion and conclusion.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Third Language Acquisition (TLA)

Third language acquisition is gaining momentum recently as a topic of investigation in the field of language didactics. Researchers have differentiated second language acquisition (SLA) from TLA as more languages interact and the acquisition processes are different. Cenoz (2003) states "[…] third language acquisition refers to the acquisition of a non-native language by learners who have previously acquired or are acquiring two other languages. The acquisition of the first two languages can be simultaneous (as in early bilingualism) or consecutive".

2.2 The notion of Cross-linguistic Influence (CLI)

In SLA and TLA studies, no topic has gained more attention than cross-linguistic influences between languages. This concept emerged in the 1950s with the publication of Languages in Contact by Uriel Weinreich. In this book, language interference is defined as "instances of language deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language" Weinreich (1953). Later, Lado coined the Contrastive Analysis hypothesis that acted as a base for understanding cross-linguistic influences. According to Lado (1957), "Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture". Furthermore, several studies have been conducted in this area and researchers have named the notion of CLI in language acquisition with different terms such as language transfer (Selinker, 1972; Kellerman, 1983; Odlin, 1989), language mixing (Kellerman, 1983; Selinker, 1972). Odlin uses the term 'transfer' referring to the interferences that happen while learning a new language. Odlin (1989) affirms: "Transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired". Studies suggest that two major types of transfer could occur while learning a new language; positive transfer which would facilitate language learning and negative transfer which would cause errors in L3.

Kellerman & Sharwood (1986) coined the new term 'cross-linguistic influence' defining it as "the interplay between earlier and later acquired languages". Jarvis (2009) defines CLI as "the influence that a person's knowledge of one language has on that person's recognition, interpretation, processing, storage and production of words in another language." Cross-linguistic transfers can be of different types; phonological, lexical, morphological, syntactic and pragmatic. Dewaele (1998) focused on lexical cross-linguistic influences and

suggested that lexical inventions are words adapted in terms of morphology and phonology to the target language but are not used by native speakers. Ringbom (1987) listed the overt cross-linguistic lexical influences as loan translations, semantic extensions, cognate, hybrid, blend and relexification. Further, Llach (2015) proposed, "when inappropriate lexical choices are made they can lead directly to the misunderstanding of the message or at least to an increase in the burden of interpreting the text".

2.3 Factors leading to cross-linguistic influence

Research has indicated that different factors influence cross-linguistic interferences between languages. De Angelis and Selinker (2001) suggest that interlanguage transfer happens due to two factors; psychotypology and foreign language effect or foreign language mode. Cenoz (2001) suggests: “psychotypology refers to the learners' perception of the relationship between two languages and they tend to do more transfer if they perceive a certain interlanguage is typologically closer to the new language”. Also, Kellerman (1983) and Anderson (1983) recognize the typological differences between languages as a significant factor. The other factors leading to interference are proficiency level (Odlin, 1989; Kellerman 1983), L2 Status (Jessner, 2008), recentness of learning (Dewaele,1998).

In summary, the study on literature review suggests that there exists a possibility of interaction between previously acquired languages and newly learned languages leading to the transfer of features between these languages. Furthermore, cross-linguistic influence is a significant area of investigation in SLA and TLA.

2.4 Typological distance

In the current research, the languages in question are Tamil as L1, English as L2 and French as L3. According to Dewaele (1998), English is a Germanic language in terms of base grammatical structure but can also be considered as a Roman language at a lexical level. Singh & Carrol (1979) suggest that we know that the learners of an Indo-European L3 or Non-Indo-European L1 will tend to rely on their knowledge of vocabulary and structures of the Indo-European L2. The learners in this research are learning French, which is typologically far from their L1 Tamil, but rather close to their L2 English.

3. Methodology

The research methodology involved the collection of data by examining class test answer scripts of French learners. Through the examination of answer scripts, numerous lexical cross-linguistic errors that the French learners committed, were identified.

3.1 Participants

Participants of the study were a group of 25 French learners aged between 17 to 20 years, studying in II year undergraduate programs at Nirmala College for Women, Coimbatore. The participants were selected on the following criteria; their L1 is Tamil, they have at least intermediate-level proficiency in their L2 (English) and moreover their L3 is French. These learners have at least completed 120 hours of French learning, starting from their higher secondary classes. The learners are of elementary level and they attend 6 hours of French class every week.

3.2 Procedure

The data collection process was carried out in March during the academic year 2023–24, through a class test.The French class test answer scripts of elementary-level learners were examined to identify possible lexical cross-linguistic influences from the L1 or the L2 towards French L3. The corpus of the study included answer scripts with high, medium and low marks which helped to have a balanced sampling. The major errors found were relexification, false cognates and calquing. A manual examination of the answer scripts enabled noting down all possible language interferences originating from language interaction. These errors were further categorized, analyzed and explained to understand better the lexical cross-linguistic influences during the French learning process. Error analysis is done based on the model provided by Corder (1981) which involves the following steps: i. Identification, ii. Description iii. Explanation iv. Evaluation v. Correction.

3.3 Data collection tool- Class test

The class test had two exercises; the first one was a translation activity and the second exercise was a French vocabulary test. These two tasks allow us to collect precise data concerning learners' errors and to determine the role of already acquired languages in French productions.

Translation is employed as an effective data collection tool for studies on cross-linguistic influences. In this task participants had to translate 15 phrases each from French to English and from English to French. Though this activity permitted us to observe how learners transferred morpho-syntactic structures, cultural concepts and vocabulary from their source language towards the target language French, in this research, we focus only on the errors relating to lexical CLIs.

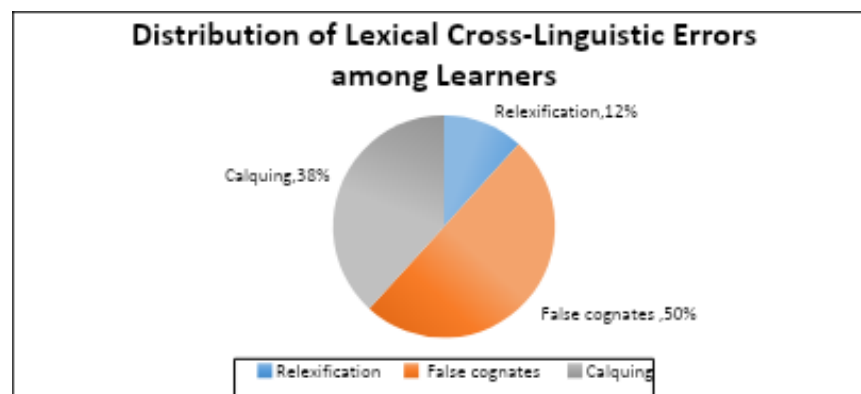
In the next exercise, participants were asked to write a French vocabulary test that is a common assessment tool used to understand the learner's vocabulary acquisition and to find out the areas that need improvement. This activity permitted the learner's proficiency in using French words and expressions and their understanding of meanings. This vocabulary test included matching exercises, using words in a sentence and multiple-choice questions. The tasks provided pieces of evidence of compensation strategies used by learners to overcome linguistic lacunas.

4. Results and discussion

The data collected was categorized and analysed and the results indicated evidence of several lexical CLIs.

4.1 Lexical cross-linguistic errors

According to Hernandez (2011), "Lexical errors are mistakes at the word level, which include, for example, choosing the wrong word for the meaning the writer wants to express." These errors frequently arise from confusion about word meanings, leading learners to select incorrect words instead of the intended ones. The primary errors identified in the activities include relexification, false cognates and direct translation (calquing).

The graph presents the distribution of lexical cross-linguistic errors among French learners. It categorizes the errors into three types: relexification, false cognate and calquing. In the learners' activities, there were four instances of relexification, 17 instances of false cognates and 13 errors relating to calquing.

Graph 1: *Percentage of Lexical Cross-Linguistic Errors by Category*

Graph 1 shows the percentage of semantic lexical errors made by the learners. The data indicate that lexical errors range from 50% to 12%, with 50% of the errors attributed to false cognates, 38% to calquing, and 12% to relexification. The categories of semantic lexical errors are detailed below, with examples drawn from the learner's activities.

4.2 False cognates

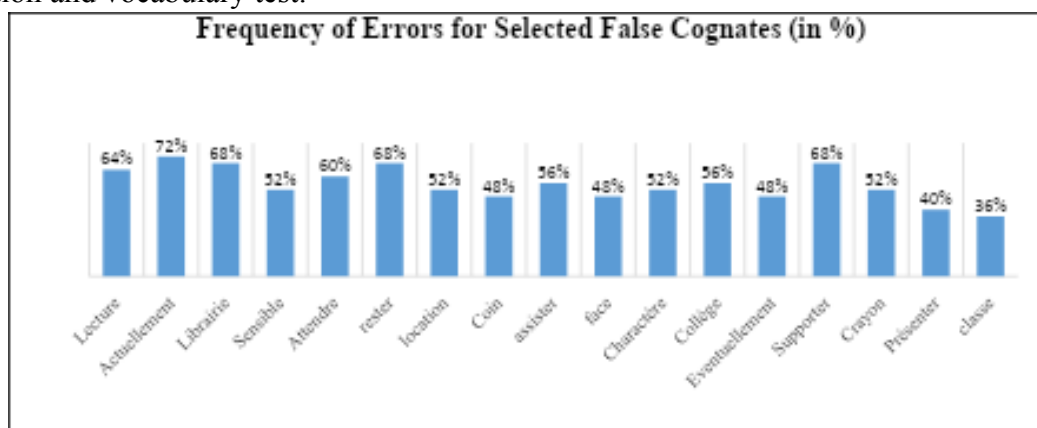
Jarvis (2009) defines false friends or descriptive cognates as "cross-linguistic word pairs that are formally the same or similar, semantically similar or dissimilar." These pairs appear similar in both languages but convey different concepts and objects, often resulting in incorrect usage. Given the form resemblance between L2 (English) and French, false cognate errors are common among French learners. Furthermore, the homologous elements and spelling resemblances contribute to the misuse of false cognates in French writing. However, false cognates, commonly referred to as false friends, often have significant differences in meaning. In the collected data, false cognates emerged as the most frequent type of lexical cross-linguistic error. Table 1 lists examples of errors in French caused by the influence of false cognates between French and English.

S.no	False cognate used in French	Actual meaning in French	Intended meaning in English	Number of learners producing errors
1	*Lecture*	Reading	A course/ A class	16
2	*Actuellement*	Currently	Actually	18
3	*Librairie*	Bookshop	Library	17
4	*Sensible*	Sensitive	Reasonable	13
5	*Attendre*	To wait/ to expect	To attend	15
6	*Rester*	To stay	To take rest	17
7	*Location*	Rental	Place	13
8	*Coin*	Corner	Coin	12
9	*Assister*	To attend	To assist	14
10	*Face*	Side	Face	12
11	*Charactère*	Character	Fictional figure in a film	13

12	*Collège*	Junior high school	Institutions of higher education	14
13	*Eventuellement*	Possibly	Eventually	12
14	*Supporter*	To tolerate	To support	17
15	*Crayon*	Pencil	Wax crayon	13
16	*Présenter*	To introduce	To present	10
17	*Classe*	Classroom	Class/course	9

Table 1: *False cognate errors*

This table also provides data on actual meaning of the word used, intended meaning in English, and the number of learners producing the error.

Graph 2 indicates the various false cognates used and their frequency of usage in the translation and vocabulary test.

Graph 2: *Frequency of Errors for Selected False Cognates*

The common errors related to words like *actuellement, librairie, rester* and supporter indicate that learners often confuse them with similar English words. The incorrect use of *'actuellement'* accounted for the highest frequency error incorrectly used by 72% of learners. 72% of learners used it assuming it shared the same meaning as the English word 'actually' but *'actuellement'* signifies currently in French. The words *rester, librairie* and *supporter* were also seen being used as a false cognate with 68% frequency. *Rester* signifies to stay, *librairie* means bookshop and *supporter* means to tolerate. However, the learners have misunderstood their meanings as to rest, library and to tolerate respectively owing to their formal similarity to the English words. The lowest frequency errors observed in this category are false cognates such as '*classe*' with 36% of learners employing it and *Présenter* with 40% of learners using it incorrectly, due to the similarity to English word pairs.

4.3 Calquing

Calquing, also known as loan translation, is a type of semantic lexical error and this involves literal translations of words and expressions from one language to another. These translations usually are syntactically correct but result in wrong translations because the intended meaning is not conveyed. In a multilingual learning context of the French language, it is observed that the learners tend to use calquing, resulting in incorrect language usage in the new language learnt. In the translation exercises given, it was observed that the learners often did literal translations of words and phrases that produced incorrect meanings in the target language, French. Examples from the samples are listed below.

i. I pass an exam is translated as '*Je passe un examen'*
In French, '*passer un examen*' means to take an exam. To pass an exam should be translated as '*réussir un examen*'.
ii. I have breakfast is translated as '*J'ai le petit-dejeuner*'
'*Avoir le petit dejeuner*' is an incorrect usage in French. It is based on the English expression 'to have breakfast'. The correct usage is '*prendre le petit-déjeuner*'.
iii. The technology has its disadvantages and is translated as *La technologie a ses désavantages*.
Correct usage is '*La technologie a ses inconvénients'*. But learners have wrongly employed the word disadvantage, owing to the similarity to the English word disadvantages.
iv. It is coldly translated as *Il est froid.*
The correct expression is *Il fait froid*. In French to describe weather, the verb '*faire*' is used. Learners have done a loan translation from English and incorrectly used the verb '*être*'.
v. She agreed is translated as *elle est agréée*.
Elle est agréée means that she is authorized or approved. The correct translation for she agreed is *elle était d'accord*.
vi. *Il est petit* is translated as he is small.
The correct translation is 'he is short'. However, the learner confusing the meaning of *petit* to small as in English, has wrongly translated the same.
vii. *Je me présente* is translated as I present.
The correct translation is my introduction. Se p*résenter* is seen to be a confusing expression in French for learners with English knowledge because they tend to misunderstand it as to present.
viii. It is my pleasure, translated as *C'est mon plaisir*.
The correct translation is '*Avec plaisir'*. This example indicates another wrong use arising due to the influence of English. Learner has directly translated the expression into French, without considering the equivalent.
ix. You are welcome translated as *Tu es bienvenue.*
In English the equivalent expressions for 'you are welcome' are *je t'en prie, de rien* and *je vous en prie*. However, learners, confused with the English words, have employed word-to-word translation which resulted in incorrect usage.
x. *Je fais une promenade* translated as' I make a walk'.
The correct translation is I take a walk, however, the learner has translated the verb 'faire' literally which leads to an incorrect expression.
xi. *Passer du temps* is translated as to pass time.
Although the correct translation is to spend time, the learner has directly translated '*passer*' to pass, owing to the similarity with English.
xii. *Il y a une place dans la centre-ville* is translated as there is a place in the city center.
The appropriate translation is there is a square in the city center but the learner has misunderstood the meaning of '*place*' as place, as in English.
xiii. I have lunch is translated as *J'ai le dejeuner*.
The correct translation is *Je déjeune* or *je prends le déjeuner*. However, learners have used a calque by wrongly selecting the incorrect word *'to have'* and have directly translated it from the English word 'to have'.

Literal translation originating from the similarity in English leads to the incorrect formation in French. Some words are adopted from English to French without any modification.

Such words arising from cross-linguistic influence between English and French do not fit appropriately into the context.

4.4 Relexification

Relexification refers to the incorrect use of a word from the target language while applying its meaning from the source language. This error combines the form of a foreign language word with the meaning derived from the learner's first or second language. Examples are listed in the following table.

S.no	Incorrect construction	Correct construction	Intended meaning
1	*Elle a appointment.*	*Elle a rendez-vous.*	She has an appointment.
2	*J'assume qu'il est présent.*	*Je suppose qu'il est présent.*	I assume that he is present.
3	*Je regarde un cinéma.*	*Je regarde un film.*	I watch a film.
4	*Je mange à l'hôtel.*	*Je mange au restaurant.*	I eat at the restaurant.

Table 2: *Examples of relexification errors*

For example, the English word 'appointment' influences learners' incorrect use of the French word appointment, whereas the correct term in French is rendez-vous. In the second example, 'assumer' in French means 'to take responsibility' but in English, it means 'to suppose'. Examples 3 and 4 illustrate relexification influenced by learners' first language, Tamil. In Tamil, borrowed words like 'cinema' (used to mean 'film') and 'hotel' (used to mean 'restaurant') are commonly used in everyday communication. This frequent usage likely contributes to learner's confusion when using these terms in French.

These examples of relexification illustrate how French learners often blend the form of a word from the target language (French) with the meaning from their first language (Tamil) or second language (English).

5. Conclusion

In this study, class test scripts of 25 Tamil-speaking French learners with English as L2 were examined to identify lexical cross-linguistic errors. False cognates, relexification and calquing were identified as primary error types. These errors were observed to arise largely from the typological similarities between English and French, highlighting the significant impact of cross-linguistic influence on learners' productions.

Through the identification and categorization of these common errors, this study provides a basis for understanding the sources of cross-linguistic lexical influences. It suggests the implementation of specific pedagogical strategies to overcome these challenges. French language instruction should prioritize activities that address false cognates, relexification, and calquing as such efforts can greatly enhance language competencies and reduce frequent errors.

Further investigation could explore phonological, morpho-syntactic, and pragmatic cross-linguistic influences in multilingual contexts, particularly among French learners with Tamil as their first language.

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